Encounter

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all'italiana

Domenico Bartoli

Kenneth Minogue

The Guru

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Max Hayward

Andrey Sinyavsky

Michael Howard:
Montgomery

Harry Johnson:
Keynes' Cambridge

Andrew Shonfield:
"Europe" Today

R. S. Thomas:
Four Poems

François Bondy:
European Notebook

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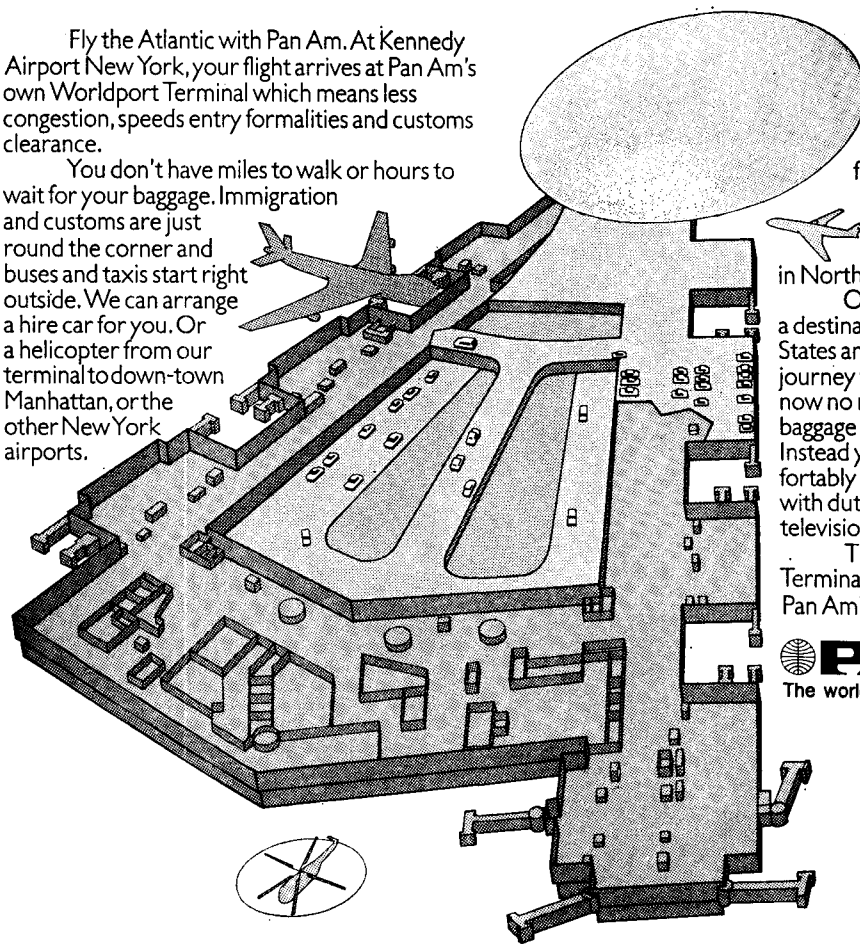

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A STAY IN THE CRESCENT *(story)* 3 *Derwent May*

ITALY'S AILMENT 9 *Domenico Bartoli*

THE GURU 19 *Kenneth Minogue*

MEN & IDEAS

ANDREY SINYAVSKY'S VOICE 30 *Max Hayward*

POETRY

Jenny King 18, *Peter Redgrove* 29, *Laurence Lerner* 37, *R. S. Thomas* 38

NOTES & TOPICS

MONTGOMERY THE MASCOT 40 *Michael Howard*

"EUROPE": POLITICS, NOT SOCIAL REFORM 47 *Andrew Shonfield*

EUROPEAN NOTEBOOK 50 *François Bondy*

BOOKS & WRITERS

MAHLER 55 *Peter Porter*

EARLY MUSIC 61 *David Fallows*

SCHOENBERG & WAGNER 65 *Wilfrid Mellers*

CRADLES OF COLD CLAY 70 *Douglas Dunn*

EAST & WEST

LETTER FROM YUGOSLAVIA 76 *Hans Heigert*

MEMOIR

HOW GOOD WAS KEYNES' CAMBRIDGE? 81 *Harry G. Johnson*

DOCUMENT

The Popovic Case (Bernard Levin) 78

LETTERS 92

AUTHORS 96

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BIG STORY

by Peter Braestrup

How the American Press and Television Reported and Interpreted the Crisis of Tet-1968 in Vietnam and Washington

Hanoi's dramatic Tet offensive of February-March 1968 had a significance far beyond any military gains or losses by either side, for its impact on the American public helped to topple a President, Lyndon Johnson, and led to the fading of support for the Vietnam War. Thus it becomes absolutely crucial to examine how American journalism—both print and broadcast—covered this historic event, what perceptions it conveyed to the readers and viewers at home. Using Tet as a case history in depth of the press portrayal of the war in Vietnam, Peter Braestrup—who covered the war himself for both the New York *Times* and the Washington *Post*—has compiled a remarkable document that reflects the analysis of millions of words published in newspapers and news magazines and broadcast over radio and television, the examination of thousands of feet of TV film, and interviews with scores of participants. Reportage by leading journalists (some of whose reputations were created in Vietnam) appears in the work, and their reports and commentaries are matched—not against official claims or a critic's polemics—but against the facts and resources available to news organizations at the time the original accounts were written. The key question Braestrup persistently asks is: What were the available "facts" at the moment when a particular event occurred, and how were those "facts" reported? The answer is inescapable: First news reports are always partly wrong; in the reporting of Tet—which included some courageous, thoughtful coverage—*much* was wrong. The book also includes an appraisal by Burns W. Roper, the noted public opinion analyst, of all the pertinent polling responses before, during, and after the Tet offensive; Roper's finding is that President Johnson (and his critics) thoroughly misread the initial public reaction to Hanoi's coordinated assault on South Vietnamese cities in 1968. Altogether, this is a landmark work—the first dispassionate analysis of the role of the U.S. press in the Vietnam War, and the most extensive study ever made of how print and electronic newsmen cover a major event.

Peter Braestrup has been an investigative reporter for the New York *Herald Tribune*, a Nieman Fellow at Harvard, and a member of the Washington Bureau of the New York *Times*. After covering Algeria, Paris, and Southeast Asia for the *Times*, he joined the Washington *Post* in 1968 as Saigon bureau chief. He is now editor of publications for the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars at the Smithsonian.

This book will be of particular interest to newspaper, magazine, radio, and TV journalists; military staff; the Foreign Service; public information agencies; and foreign affairs groups. It should be added to general as well as specialized libraries. This most definitive study—a case history of the U.S. press covering an important event—is essential reading for every citizen considered "informed."

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Derwent May

A Stay in the Crescent

WE THOUGHT THERE WAS something funny about Bill Blend from the day he arrived in the Crescent. Frances came home saying she'd seen a man go up the path of No 18 pushing a rack like the rag trade use, with dozens of little girls' dresses hanging on it.

"Kinky-dinky", said Alan, who'd come in to drink a glass of my super Lebanese red.

"Perhaps you could go and cadge a few of them, Alan", said Frances. "Naomi's dresses all look like doll's dresses on her again."

"Ah! Ah!" said Alan, cautioningly. "No cheap frills for Naomi!"

Next morning the removals van turned up. I hadn't got to go to the studio till after lunch—I manage one of the big studios, you know, for the TV outfit you'd all like to belong to—so I strolled past about eleven to have a look. A man of my age, early thirties let us say, was standing on the doorstep of No 18 in a well-cut dark suit and a rather nice blue velvet tie; and three furniture men were taking tea-chests up the path. The new inhabitant wasn't saying anything to them, but his eyes were going everywhere. He looked at the steps under his feet, as though he were calculating the height of each of them, then across to me, just a single, sharp glance, then back again at the workmen, as if he were making sure they had a good grip on the boxes, then round the garden, across the road and back to the men. But when a little girl in a short, red frock ran out from the house and grabbed his hand, his whole manner changed. He turned abruptly, and lifted her up in his arms, staring closely into her face. He seemed to be questioning her tenderly, his eyes not moving from hers now.

"No spare dresses", I said to Frances when I got back. "There's a daughter."

"Oh Christ." She switched off her East German mixer. "Another one for parties. I'm not having any more parties after this year, darling, just little outings to the front row of the movies with a bosom friend."

The girl soon turned up at Naomi's school. I whipped Naomi round in the car one morning when I was late, double-parked, hoping the headmistress wasn't looking out of her window, and going through the old 1890s gateway I got stuck between two boys dragging cellos along in tatty brown bags.

"Christ", I said to them, "this is carrying primary music a bit too far!" Just then, Naomi whispered loudly behind me, "That's the girl who hasn't got a mummy." I turned casually, looking at the top windows on the other side of the street, and let my gaze drop slowly on to the man in the blue velvet tie, who was edging his way between the cars at the pavement side.

"Music jam", I said to him, as he came up to the gate.

He obviously didn't recognise me, but he suddenly smiled very fully, almost ingratiatingly. His eyes went rocketing round, taking it all in—the boys at the gate, Naomi—then he looked back at me, still smiling, and fumbling for a joke. "Double parking, double basses", he said, laughing faintly. "What's it all coming to?"

"I think I've seen you at the door of No 18, haven't I?" I said. "This is my daughter Naomi, who the school has just started having to put up with."

"Aha! This is my daughter, Jenny. A good school, isn't it, I think—one of the best in North London, it's one reason why we came here." He looked at me anxiously now, his dark eyebrows coming close together—wanting me to agree with him, it seemed.

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"Not quite bloody awful", I said. "Only the children."

We took the girls in, and I gave Naomi a kick up the arse while the new inhabitant kissed his Jenny, who was a quiet, dark little thing, but sharp-eyed like her father. Out on the pavement, I told him my name, Jonny Grafton, and he told me his, and I said he must come and have a drink one evening.

"Evenings perhaps not, though it's very kind of you. I must first get a good nanny and some baby-sitters. I'm interviewing all this week. But some time soon would be very nice."

"I'll ring you." I was nettled for a moment by his reply, but then I thought, let the poor chap sort his affairs out, I don't know what I'd do without Frances. "If you still can't manage evenings", I added, "I'll suggest a Sunday."

I didn't give him a lift, that would have been going too far; but I paid him a silent compliment by saying to Frances when I popped in on the way back, "They're double parking the double-basses at the bloody place now."

ALAN, OF COURSE, picked up some gossip quite quickly. Blend's wife wasn't dead; she'd left him when they were either in Africa or New Zealand, and he had whisked the child home to England. The man that his wife had gone off with was either a big-game hunter or an airport official—if the latter, this was the reason Blend had come home, wherever he'd come from, by sea. He himself—this was more generally confirmed—was some sort of banking expert, working at present in the City, but liable to be sent abroad on advice-giving tours. The locals had talked to him mainly at the school gates, where they were agreed on his motives for coming to our best end of London. It was our dear old Dutch-gabled primary, famous for its proportions of classy kids and old London nippers, where he could feel Jenny was getting the healthiest that was going, while living just round the corner and keeping her close to the paternal bosom.

Well, we couldn't mind that, and Jenny herself soon chummed up with Naomi. Blend had got a woman to fetch Jenny from school, and give her her tea and play with her, and prepare her for bed before he came home. But soon the two girls were spending nearly every afternoon in our garden after school, and as the last thing Frances wanted was to entertain the nanny every day, the poor thing had to go back to No 18 and spend her hours getting on with the ironing, or watching the children's programmes on her own. She was a big, bosomy Finnish girl in brown suits, who seemed to like being with Jenny; but there was no sign that Blend gave a thought either to her charms or her problems, provided Jenny was getting what she needed.

We eventually got him to come round for a drink one Sunday lunchtime. It was tricky, because we didn't want Alan there, and he usually came on Sundays. So we had to crack down on Blend with all our powers of persuasion for the one weekend we knew Alan was going to be away in the country. Afterwards, of course, we had to make Alan think the whole thing was pure accident, while getting maximum mileage out of telling him what had happened while he wasn't there. Not that anything exceptional happened, in fact; but there were two moments that struck us at the time, and made even better sense later.

Blend arrived at the door in that covetable blue tie of his—I thought it ought to have a few stains on it by now, but it didn't. Jenny was in a ravishing little purple velvet dress that almost matched her dad's tie. The girls spoke to each other shyly under the parental eyes, then dashed off to the back together, while I took Blend into the drawing-room.

He'd already met Frances in the street, and though he greeted her with perfect courtesy, he sat down at once without any fuss. Obviously he knew his drink, but he took his knowledge in his stride. "Nice hock", he said to me after sipping my Schloss Eltz at first as though it were water. "I must get some for the boardroom, it's muck there." He seized the bottle from the low table in the middle of us, stared at the label, then put it firmly back without looking, his eyes going round the room, giving a little smile to Frances as they crossed her face. Neurotic he might be, but I could see he was a man of some power. He turned the conversation immediately to the school again, recalling the jam in the gate that first morning, and going on to question us about the arrangements for music in the later classes.

Just then Naomi and Jenny rushed into the room hand-in-hand. "I'm going to be Jenny's mummy", Naomi shouted. "Can I, Mummy?"

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Blend jumped so hard I thought he was going clean off the screen. Frances took it in at once. She spoke quickly and emphatically, in the one voice Naomi knew spelt danger for her. "Go out straight away and play in the garden. Immediately."

"Bum", said Naomi, then she shouted "Come on, bunny-bum" to Jenny, and the two of them ran out as cheerfully as they had come in.

Frances seemed to have saved the scene. Blend, though speaking a shade more quickly, resumed the question he had been asking. Frances had been going to enquire delicately about his wife, but I could see she was thinking better of it. We got on to his work, and he told us about the Sydney bank where Chinese triplets had presented themselves simultaneously in the fading light, and got away with three times the balance one of them had ostentatiously built up. But he didn't laugh at his own stories.

"Wasn't Jenny abroad with you?" Frances said, just trying very gently, I could see.

"Yes, she was with . . . with me in Cape Town."

"Does she remember it, do you think?"

"I don't know, I suppose so." He paused, then spoke for one moment with a trace of hysteria in his voice. "I don't know if I want her to remember, I don't know."

But that was as personal as he got. He went on to talk about the beauty of Cape Town. The other arresting moment came just before he left. The girls had come back into the house, with no more mention of the intended game, and Frances had picked Naomi up and carried her into the hall. I bent down to say "Boo" to Jenny, and looked up to see Blend staring with quite scary intensity at Frances. She was wearing a red shoulderless dress, and Naomi had pulled it away from her breasts and was peering down at them, laughing mischievously. Frances hadn't noticed Blend's look because she was smiling at Naomi. Blend had already said his thank-yous and goodbyes, and now, like lightning, he and Jenny were out of the door.

"You'd better watch out what you're wearing with old Bill Randy", I said to Frances, as we went down to the kitchen to finish getting the lunch ready; and I told her what I'd seen.

"Do you think it was sex?" she said. "Goody."

"Sex plus", I said. "And the sex soon goes out of that."

"I'd better stick to you then, you simple bastard", she said; and I did what Naomi had done, only put my hands down too.

SO THE BLENDS SETTLED INTO the life of the Crescent. We got to like little Jenny, who didn't have a lot to say to us, but seemed to join keenly enough in the games Naomi organised for her friends. We began to find her having a decent influence on Naomi, who would now have occasional outbursts of calm and thoughtfulness.

Nan James, who lived next to Blend at No 17, was the only person who got into any sort of intimate conversation with him. She gave him a lift back from the dry cleaners one Saturday afternoon and took him in to tea. The next evening she was round to tell us all about it.

I can't bear Nan, really, the way she's always throwing her floppy skirts up into the air and showing her thighs, when she's sitting down, as though it was the tropics and she had to keep cooling herself. But, come to think of it, perhaps that's what got Blend talking, considering the interest he'd already shown in what was visible behind women's clothes.

I gave Nan a large, rather bland sherry that no one in the house liked much, and Frances got on with her crochet; but we were both rather impressed at what she'd got out of Blend.

"He sat there, darlings, with his arms on the kitchen table, and his head propped up with his knuckles, and he really beat his breast. He said he's always been so anxious, he'd always been so worried, that he'd really been quite irresponsible. That wasn't a bad remark, was it, eh? He said he'd fussed so much about having everything like a good family should that he must have made his wife's life hell. But he was always so sure he was doing it for her sake and Jenny's, he said. Anyway, they were in Cape Town, like people have been saying, you know, and she just fell like mad for this pilot—that's all he'd say about that. And one night she didn't come back to the hotel and he couldn't bear it, he couldn't bear it for Jenny or himself, he said, and he went down to the harbour and got cabins on the boat that very morning—he couldn't bear to go near the airport, and he

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told himself he could present it all to Jenny as a little holiday, a sea-cruise, you know. He said he never gave his wife a chance to come back, he forced her really to throw her lot in with the other man, hiding himself and Jenny on the ship like that just at the moment she might have decided not to go on with it. She must be feeling awful, he says, but he's terrified her, saying what he'll do if she tries to force her way into his new house where Jenny's settling down. By the way, he said how grateful he is to you, for Naomi and all that, you know. It seems he's terrified for Jenny. He said he often lies down at night imagining himself in Jenny's cot, trying to see the world through her eyes without her mother, you know, trying to feel all she must be suffering, so he can do whatever he can about it."

"Christ!" I said. "More sherry, Nan!"

"But he's doing all right", said Frances. "Maybe all that helps, but what he's doing's sensible enough, you wouldn't have thought it needed all that. Jenny's doing as well as you could expect in the circumstances, better even."

"What about his own life?" I asked.

"Oh", said Nan, opening a great cavern of thigh and knicker, "that *is* his life now, you could see he's just as much a worrier as ever, he's enthralled by this."

"Yeh", I said. You had to admit Nan was not a complete fool, for all her grotty ways.

It was the beginning of June by now, and with the long evenings Jenny started staying later and later. The Finnish nanny was more on her own than ever, and must have felt very superfluous some days. But it wasn't that that caused her abrupt departure. It was Blend's discovery that she worked as a masseuse in some sleazy sauna parlour in the evenings. How Blend found out we never knew. Alan was convinced that he himself had gone down into the steamy depths, and found the big, choppy hands that folded his daughter's clothes waiting there to seize him. He sacked her on the spot. Nan told us all about it—her last communication before slipping off to Sardinia for two glorious months. I fed her on the end of that sherry bottle.

"He was absolutely livid, but he was almost in tears as well." Flop! went her great skirt, and I managed to turn my eyes away just in time. "He's absolutely desperate about that daughter of his and it's all so unnecessary. Thank God I shan't be seeing them for a couple of months. My God, I'm looking forward to going. Maybe he'll fall on your shoulder while I'm away, Frances—anyway, keep an eye on him while I'm not here."

Thank you very much, bitch, I thought. But I couldn't have guessed what she was going to miss away on her Sardinian pastoral.

BILL HAD CERTAINLY REACHED a desperate pass—even more so when I met him at the school a day or two later. He'd got in another nanny, a middle-aged Scotswoman with a nose like a set-square, who took no pleasure in Jenny's company but severely rationed her visits to us. I felt sorry for the Finnish girl, who had really felt, I think, that the bit of the day she spent with Jenny was important for them both. Anyway, Blend's attempts to think himself into Jenny's bed had made him see that she wasn't so happy with Mrs Macgillivray.

"Mr Grafton", he said to me (I hadn't heard that name since I was a boy), "I'm sorry Jenny doesn't come to play with Naomi so much as she did—I'm not assuming, of course, that you want her any more than she comes, but I thought I ought to offer an explanation. I feel I have to let this new woman do things her own way or nothing'll work—I can't change again so soon. Believe me, Jenny's sorry too."

"She'll ease off a bit, with luck", I said. "Believe me, Jenny's always welcome."

We were standing in a corridor in the school basement, and, suddenly wilting, Blend rested his hand on the roof of a Wendy house. It went down with a clatter between the walls, and three boys, one of them shouting "Ooh, ooh, ooh, the funky gibbon!" rushed up to pull it out.

"Look", said Blend to me, his eyebrows twitching towards each other, and almost looking as if they'd spark if they touched, "I can't tell you how grateful I am to you for saying that." He hardly glanced at the noisy scene he had created. "I really don't know what to do. I've got to go abroad again in a month or six weeks, and I just can't bear to think of Jenny on her own—I mean. . . ." His voice trailed away. "She'll just have to stay with Mrs Macgillivray, who'll live in the house, but if she could spend a bit of time with you I'd be terribly relieved."

"Easy-peasy", I said. "No sooner said than settled."

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"Oh, that's some weight—well, indeed, a great weight off my mind. Please thank your wife so much, Mr Grafton." And he tottered off.

Still, the story after that was that he was looking more bowed than ever. Nan had gone, and we didn't hear of him being in anybody else's home. The next thing that happened was one day when I was home for tea. Jenny, sitting in the garden chewing a piece of grass, suddenly said something that really surprised us. "My mummy came to see me last night."

"Your mummy?" said Frances, unable to conceal her astonishment.

"I'm your mummy", said Naomi contemptuously.

"It was my real mummy", said Jenny. "She came to hug me in my bed and it was lovely."

"In the night?" said Frances.

"Yes. She came in the dark. She looked a bit funny in the dark but it was lovely."

"I *am* glad", said Frances. "Is she coming again?"

"Yes", said Jenny. "I hope so." She said it so simply and pathetically that her little head, with its cropped black hair and black, solemn eyes, seemed to get even smaller above her grey jacket, as she sat there on the grass.

We couldn't quite believe it, and wondered at first if she'd had an hallucination, or just a dream. No one got near enough to Bill, in any sense, to ask him about it. But a week or so later Naomi came in from school shouting, "Mummy, Jenny's mummy came to see her again."

This time Frances questioned Jenny a bit more closely. "Had Mrs Gilly"—that's what the children called her—"gone when your mummy came?"

"Yes. She always goes after I've cleaned my teeth, and Daddy puts me to bed."

"Had you gone to sleep?"

"I don't know."

"Was it in the dark?"

"It was dark because the curtains were drawn. But I think it was still daylight."

"Did she say anything?"

"She said 'Mummy's here'. And she said she'll always be near me. She's going to come again."

"I'm so glad, Jenny."

"My God", Frances said to me afterwards, when she told me of this conversation, "do you think the woman's so scared she sort of slips in without Bill knowing? Or do you think she supposes it's just better when the child's half-asleep, not to have to explain too much? It's rather touching, if it's true she can't do any more, but it's very spooky."

"I don't know", I said. "I can't believe Blend doesn't know about it. We'll just have to ask him if we want to know."

That was easier said than done, without Nan in the Crescent. Alan wouldn't dare speak to him about it; Frances would have done, but whenever they met Bill slipped away under a hail of thanks and courtesies. Nearly everyone else in the Crescent knew about it, but they were even less intimate with Blend than we were.

In the end, it fell to me to put the question. But a bloody lot of information I got, all the same, when I caught him in the school gateway between the gatepost and the milkman, and dragged him into conversation, keeping the big subject till the milkman had got his crates out of earshot.

"Jenny says her mother's been visiting her."

He went quite pale. "Oh—oh yes, I expect she would tell you, I'm glad she wanted to. Yes, her mother's called once or twice, we've got some sort of rapprochement over Jenny. Look—sorry, I must dash, I've got to make arrangements for going to Zaire this morning —you can't imagine how difficult it is, you'd think it was a country invented by bankers just to justify the way they do things at home."

JENNY, AFTER HER FIRST good reaction to her mother's appearance, didn't seem to keep it up. Mrs Gilly kept getting cross with her, and when she came to our house she was listless. One day Naomi said she didn't want to play any more with Jenny, though the next day she'd forgotten that and was begging for Jenny to come in. Frances ventured to ask Jenny if her mother was still coming, but this time she wouldn't answer. Naomi also said Jenny wouldn't talk about the matter. "She wants her mummy to stay with her", Naomi said.

Then, one evening, Frances, Alan and I were coming back along the Crescent from the pub. It was a lovely evening, about ten, the light just fading. Everyone had been planting honeysuckle in their gardens this year, and enough of it had taken for the

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scent to be drifting through the air all along the Crescent tonight.

"A good night for the ghostly Mrs Blend", said Alan. I think the thought was in all our heads—we hadn't said a word about it, but perhaps it was one reason why we'd left the pub early, hoping we might see something as we came back. But there was no one about in the Crescent, only lights going on in windows with the curtains still open, glimpses of large abstract paintings and bookshelves. We stopped outside No 18. There were no lights on there, and the garden was the worse for wear, the grass dry, dead leaves and crumbling flowers on the rose bushes. Suddenly there was a scream—Jenny's voice. Then again—"No! no!"

"My God! That's Jenny", said Frances. "What shall we do?"

"Act", said Alan. And as he ran up the path, we ran behind him. I felt terrible, but now Alan had moved I couldn't bring myself to try and stop him—maybe he was right, maybe there was something going on in the house that we had to prevent.

He bounded up the steps and grabbed the door-handle, and the door opened. As we went in, we heard a door slam upstairs, then a sobbing scream from Jenny, sounding very far away, "Mummy! Mummy!" We raced up the stairs, Alan still leading. Jenny's cries were coming from behind a door, and she was beating on it. I seized the handle of the door, but this one was locked. Neither Alan nor I had the kind of bones that could break it down, but I shouted "Coming, Jenny", and Frances echoed me. Then we heard a noise from behind a door at the end of the corridor. "Come on", said Alan, and rushed at the door, which opened immediately.

It was an amazing sight that we saw. There was Blend, in a long black skirt and a man's vest, powder on his cheeks, some kind of soft patches over his eyebrows. A wig of long black hair and some sort of stuffed corset were on the counterpane of the bed beside him. He was weeping silently. He stared at me pleadingly—with his eyes in his streaky face he looked as if he were behind bars.

Then he shouted, "I had to try! She needed her mother!"

"Shut the door", I said to the others. "Don't worry", I said to Blend. "Where's the key to Jenny's room?"

He looked terrified. "Don't let her see!"

"No", I said. "Don't worry. Where's the key?"

He glanced at the bed and I saw the key lying by the wig. I gave it to Frances. "Go and comfort her", I said. "Don't let her come in." I took the female gear off the bed and kicked it underneath.

"Come on", I said to Blend. "Get 'em off quick."

Alan nipped round to unzip the skirt at Blend's back, and I got the tap running in the basin in the corner of the room. Blend just did everything we said like a child, without a word. I found a suit and a shirt in the wardrobe and laid them out for him on the bed, and in three or four minutes we had him looking fairly spruced up. Then we all went out, and down to the drawing-room, where we could hear Frances talking to Jenny.

She was sitting on Frances's lap on the sofa. When her father came in, she looked at him desperately and said "Where's Mummy?" You had to admit old Bill was marvellous. He went and took her gently off Frances's lap and held her close to him, her head on his shoulder.

"She had to go, darling. You know she can't stay long. But she'll write to us, I'm sure. She wants you to be a good girl and not cry."

"Come on", I said to the others. Blend knew well enough what it was to be a mother.

Frances got up. "Night, night, darling", she said to Jenny. "See you tomorrow. Naomi's looking forward to seeing you." We went out into the summer evening again.

At the gate, Alan said loudly, "Phew! I reserve comment on all that till tomorrow." Frances and I walked home in silence. Anything we could have to say would have to wait till bed, and in the end we didn't find much to say to each other there, either.

Next morning, the Blends had gone. I heard it outside the school from old Mrs Greene, who'd seen them leave in a taxi, loaded with suitcases, at six o'clock, when she was watering her geraniums. She asked me if they were going on holiday. I went back to tell Frances, and found Alan already there. His uncustomary silence was already a thing of the past.

"Off again, then", he said, when I'd announced what Mrs Greene had seen. "Well, he's the sort of chap with a wife in every port."

But this morning Frances and I could only look away.

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Domenico Bartoli

Italy's Ailment *all'italiana*

NO ONE IS keener to run himself down than an Italian. We are ashamed of being Italian, and have lost our self-respect. Go all over the world, visit countries near or far, look at the customs of the most decadent or the most primitive people, the most prosperous or the poorest, and you will be hard put to it to find contempt like ours for the nation's history, for the institutions and customs in which it manifests itself, for the characters that have come out of it, or for the events far or near in time which for some reason have caught the attention of historians and chroniclers.

The rage with which we regard our Italian national misfortunes seems to fill us with an uncontrollable enthusiasm. The whip that falls on our back, and is generally wielded by our own hand, makes us shriek with triumph and exultation. When we want to describe some subtly prepared deception, something badly done, some ineffective action or a piece of unseemly behaviour, we use an expression that includes us all in its general condemnation: "Italian style."

It began, I think, with *Divorzio all'italiana*, an entertaining film that appeared when the realistic movement was starting to decline. We widened the expression, making it worse and worse, more and more contemptuous, and applying it to all sorts of things. Doing something "*all'italiana*" now means behaving in a rough-and-ready, confused, inefficient and, in the end, dishonest fashion.[1] When cholera broke out in Naples in the summer of '73, this self-criticism surpassed itself: some journalists roared exultantly that cholera was more widespread in Italy than in certain black African countries, never for a moment questioning the statistics put out by those distant governments. In the nature of things, *tifo all'italiana* simply had to be worse than any other kind.[2]

Traditional patriotism, in this way, has been turned completely upside down. The eloquence that at one time in this country, and even today in most other countries, was used to exalt the qualities and actions, whether real or imaginary, of the people, the nation and the state, is today used for a totally contradictory purpose. The rhetoric of upended patriotism follows the same line as chauvinism, copies its exaggerations, crazes, inventions and fantasies. It carries on in the same manner, but moves in the opposite direction.[3]

Not that there is any lack of reasons, facts, incidents and characters with which to enrich and

[1] Relieved, yet with some sadness, I noticed that an unsophisticated shopkeeper in a seaside town had marked his ice-cream products proudly: "*Gelati all'italiana.*" This was the one and only time I was able to say that the expression, as if by a miracle, still retained a favourable meaning, at least in the eyes of some provincials.

[2] The notorious spread of the disease in certain places was a result of the criminal carelessness of some public health authorities, not to a collapse of health and hygiene in the whole of Italy. In fact the average life-span of Italians is now over 70 years (as compared with 42 at the beginning of the century). The death rate is at general European levels (around ten per thousand). See the data in an article by G. Tagliacarne in *Il Tempo* (15 Sept. 1975).

[3] This is shown in the uses of ordinary Italian speech today. Whereas at one time foreign words, even the most useful, were prohibited from the language with ridiculous strictness, today words are borrowed from other languages for no good reason whatsoever.

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fill the tragic, grotesque collection of the upended patriots. Their new-style pantheon is full of figures and witticisms, and has memorable dates and legendary events to celebrate. In fact it is crowded with happenings and heroes; from enthusiastic descriptions of Italy's military embarrassments to those of civilian corruption, varying the tale of the Italians' collective cowardice (real or imaginary) with others to show their inability to govern or be governed. *Gesta Dei per italos.*

This way of arguing is widespread—more so in some places, less so in others—in every social class, party and group, because everyone in Italy has some reason to protest against, and to resent, the national community. The extreme Right harshly reproaches Italy for having betrayed (as it says, or at least thinks) Mussolini and Fascism (or the Monarchy and the King), for having abandoned the way of nationalism and patriotic pride. The conservatives fear for their endangered family fortunes, oppose every mention of change, and see only revolution in every claim for amelioration. The far Left seeks a profound change of régime, which may come about through slow infiltration, according to the official Communist view, or else through violence, as the more lunatic fringe would prefer. Both of these have an interest in discrediting the past and much of the present. The democratic Left is disappointed by the endless difficulty of bringing about the smallest reforms and takes every chance of giving vent to its sense of bitterness. The centre, where Catholics and moderates are to be found, when faced with the criticisms and disappointments of the rest to some extent accepts them and to some extent submits to them. In any event, it leaves it to official speeches and pronouncements, with their empty, unheeded pomposity, to use the obsolete tone of the old patriotism, a tone that has now become thoroughly insincere.

ON EVERY SIDE, POLITICALLY, then, the bitterest criticism and the most insulting denunciations join hands to assail the abstraction called Italy. "This country! . . . What a country!" cry its critics and attackers, as if it were not their country at all. De Gaulle used to speak of his country as if it were a living, holy person—*Notre Dame de France*. For many of us here it is just the opposite: Italy has become *il diavolo*. The accusations come from varying points of view, and the facts put forward vary as well, but the violence with which they are expressed is more or less the same. Unanimity is found in an irredeemable condemnation of Italy, that is, of ourselves. This curious national agreement comes from opposed states of mind and opposed interests, and in fact reflects our incurable divisions. In no way is it a sign of solidarity, even a perverse one; indeed it is another cause of profound damage, which is lessened only by the scepticism which triumphs in the end over all the rest.

The upended patriot—*il patriota capovolto*—may be an intellectual in a tight circle of his own subtleties, an artist or a writer committed to social and political struggles, an immensely rich industrialist, a poor wretch, an agitator, a party leader, a suburban militant, a workman, a manager, a pensioner, a young man, an old man, in other words anyone at all. Each one of us (including myself) is already, or may become, or from one minute to the next may go back to becoming, an upended patriot. The variety of the protests, and of the incitements that provoke them, shows how wide, how multiple, it all is, and how strong are the roots of an evil habit that goes back for centuries, but has increased and spread angrily over the last few years.

BEFORE I TURN TO LOOK for a moment at our long history, near or far, I should like to pause to comment on this state of mind a bit more; an outlook that I encounter every day of the week in private conversations, newspaper articles, and books, and not seldom in public speeches as well. The particular reasons that lead people to protest are often true or at least seem so. True, or seemingly true, nearly always as facts, and in every case true or seemingly true from the point of view of the protester. But the accuracy of the wrong denounced is less important than the deep-seated reasons that lead to this invective; reasons which engender a resigned scepticism that makes most people believe that things here in Italy cannot go in any other way, cannot take any other turn.

The true reason lies not so much in the weakness of patriotic feeling, which is something all too old and obvious (and so not worth lingering over), as in the rejection of all responsibility, whether individual or of the group. The fault is not mine, neither is it yours or his. If it is anyone's it is his, because whoever is not there is to blame. The fault is that of Italians in general, of Italy,

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the nation, the people, the state; of this Italy and these Italians, but also of the Italy and Italians of long ago, far back in the mists of time. What can the individual do in the face of a whole people, indeed of the thousands of years of history beating down upon him? Nothing, except look after his own interests and those of the clan he belongs to (family, social group, or perhaps his political party or his home town).

Here, I think, can be found the meaning of a fair-sized part of the protests and denunciations, the deepseated reason for upended patriotism, *patriottismo capovolto*. People tend to exclude themselves from the general condemnation. A magic circle is drawn around oneself, and around one's friends and colleagues. Inside it are the angels, outside it the devils. It is not always so: sometimes their extreme scepticism makes people confess their own guilt and include themselves with the rest ("*Siamo tutti così*, we're all like that, we're all Italians", etc.). But more often, pouring every accusation and unloading all responsibility upon the abstraction of Italy absolves the person who is speaking or writing, and a few others with him. The louder people shout against the country, the more they hope to save themselves. In a great shipwreck the man who is quick can always find a raft. Never mind if it is only salvation *all'italiana*.

For this reason, let me consider the "temperament" or "character" of Italians, our traditions and our customs, which are supposed to be immutable, as if they had not changed across the centuries, and consider with them the mistakes and faults which we think we see around us. Let us suppose there is an unbreakable link of cause and effect between our past, our customs, our convictions, and all the things we deplore and, as a rule, do ourselves. In this way we shall find an alibi, both for ourselves and for other people. For if things done Italian-style are done in this way, and cannot be done in any other way, then why get so worked up about them? Why are people so angry and so accusing, why do they tear their hair? If the whole country is accused, if a whole people is indicted, then everything is confused and blurred and loses its point. And the only reasonable conclusion then is the darkest scepticism or the most furious, destructive rage.[4]

I DO NOT MEAN, with all this, to dismiss entirely the opinions and states of mind from which arises the self-destructive feeling I am trying to describe. But I think I should try to complete them rationally. They lack charity, and they lack altruism. Instead of being free and open-minded, as they may appear to be, and worthy of citizens-of-the-world because free from narrow subjection to any one country, these feelings are selfish, enclosed within the limitations of a single person, or family, or at the most class or party or even (as we shall see) city. It is so easy to appear independent and progressive by rejecting a feeling that belonged, and will always belong, to every organised community. It is so easy to avoid one's duties with the excuse that it's simply not worth carrying them out. The tax dodger and the youngster who dislikes the prospect of military service (not the conscientious objector, when he is obeying some deep moral principle) both think they have found a way of justifying themselves. And so do dishonest, idle, inefficient people of every type, class, conviction and party.

Upended patriotism is not a medicine. It may have been one immediately after the years of Italian national chauvinism, but it is no longer one. It is now a sleeping pill and a poison. It offers no remedies, it does not build up after it has destroyed. Its tone is exaggerated, extreme, almost exultant. It is not so much bitter as contemptuous, and not so much contemptuous as small-minded and smug.

A formula has been found which encourages the property-owner to defend what belongs to him (and he considers it untouchable) by every possible means; which encourages the common man to have no hope in justice and to trust instead in the power of violent protest; it makes the fool think himself intelligent, the intelligent man believe only in cunning, the cunning think himself master of his surroundings, the trickster be proud of his dirty tricks, and the dupe resign himself or, in his turn, try to dupe others. All this, even if the motives and interests of those involved are opposed to one another, has as its central point the Italians' lack of faith in themselves as a people and as a state.

In individual cases it may not always be so, but logically the first step along this road necessarily involves a break with the past. Each

[4] It is likely that feelings of attachment to the country and its traditions, which have almost vanished in the middle and upper-middle classes and in particular among Italian intellectuals, still survive among people lower down the social scale. But the main influence comes from the ruling classes and the more cultured levels, where, I suspect, people like the rhetoric of upended patriotism a good deal more than those at "lower levels."

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people (and even more each nation) exists in so far as it clings to shared traditions and feels it has a history behind it. This may be recent or ancient, rich or poor, glorious or mediocre; whichever it is, it is the people's own. Without this link, national cohesion is lost.

A PARADOXICAL STORY will help to show what I mean. The Spanish liberal writer Salvador de Madariaga, an exile for the past forty years, who has just returned to post-Franco Spain, once told me that he had argued to the undergraduates in a debate at the Oxford Union that even untrue history is useful in making and maintaining a nation. He told them that when his wife happened to be passing through Waterloo Station at the beginning of the First World War, she asked the porter what he was going to do. "I shall volunteer", he replied, "like my father—and like my grandfather, who a hundred years ago on this very spot was one of those who defeated Napoleon. . . ." For years this man had confused the London railroad station of Waterloo with the famous battlefield; he had lived with images and memories of his country and his family's heroism which now helped to stimulate his own gesture of patriotism. The geographical reference was faulty, but the feeling was real.

THE FACT REMAINS that a people needs historical memories, incidents, figures it can return to, past happenings in which it can believe. It is quite possible for national history to be diversely interpreted by opposite sides. In France the differences are well known between, for instance, the legitimist historians and Jacobin historians, the Catholics and the anti-clericals, and so on. However, a certain unity must be established beyond these differences, though without the use of deliberate falsification and empty rhetoric. People must be shown the reasons for a common feeling, and the political and moral justification for the sacrifices which often have to be asked for. If the past is ignoble, then the future becomes an impenetrable fog. Why stay together, then? Merely as a result of a coincidence of birth?

Unlike Saturnus, who devoured his children, we are devouring our fathers. In the past, and especially under Mussolini's fascism, our country's history was blindly exalted, and this helped to set off an extreme reaction in the opposite direction. Where this will end, it is impossible to see. Italians tend to go all the way, at least in words. So nationalistic conformity has been replaced by an opposite type of conformity. Untrue history, with its stories distorted out of habit or through some instinctive tendency rather than with any clear and deliberate purpose, has changed its position. If there was an Italian porter like the one at Waterloo Station, he would certainly want to work in a station called Caporetto. Again, Italians from the two extremes are converging from opposite positions and coming together in one destructive movement. A silent alliance has been formed between those who look back nostalgically to the Bourbons and certain futurist historians of the Left.

The Left seems to have forgotten its own origins in the Risorgimento and the way in which most of the followers of Garibaldi and Mazzini took part in a royal parliament. On this side, people regret the "*revolution manquée*" and like to confuse the *sanfedistiche* risings of the Risorgimento's enemies with progressive movements. The Right is more rough and ready: it waves the flag of the Ferdinands and Francescos, forgets their infamous deeds, praises a golden time that never existed and forgives neither the house of Savoy nor the followers of Garibaldi. This constitutes neither a critique of the Risorgimento, nor a sympathetic understanding of the supporters of the Bourbons and a defence of those among them who fought bravely for their king. It is merely an impassioned judgment that condemns a particular age in our history and the whole achievement of national unity. (In it we have heard echoes of the demagogic campaigns of the followers of Achille Lauro in Naples and all over the South. They claimed to be supporters of the house of Savoy, but in fact rejected what was best in its inheritance and in the lessons it taught.)

That vulnerable target of the destroyers, liberal Italy, has been torn apart by the combined attacks of reactionary and revolutionary polemicists. Here, too, a balanced revision, carried out in a careful, controlled way, is very much needed. Benedetto Croce's *History of Italy from 1817 to 1914*, which my own generation found so moving, when it discovered it among the half-forbidden books of the time, gave the period—and the man it exalted to be its main figure, Giovanni Giolitti—an image that was certainly too favourable, too rosily coloured. But today we have gone to the other extreme: systematic demolition. We expect men who lived a century

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ago to have a sensitivity that simply did not belong to their time. We exaggerate the unfavourable aspects of the period, conceal any progress that was made, and deny the existence of social and political liberties, which may have been limited, but were expanding slowly and surely in the fifty years after the unification of Italy.[5]

The efforts of the demolition men (whether conscious or unconscious) are directed even more against Italy in the First World War. For a generation Italians tried to ignore the defeat at Caporetto and spoke only of the Piave and of the Vittorio Veneto. Now, it is quite the opposite. It seems that Italy did not win the First World War or won it only by chance, and that victory, so wrongly achieved, did irreparable harm. Here, the destroyers are active on the Left, for the Right remains faithful to the enthusiasm of those who fought in it. When the attack has an object (many simply follow the tide, with little concern about anything else), it consists in preventing Italy from having anything in its past, however small, that suggests success or prestige.

These people do not merely say, as they could rightly do, that the Italian political class, up to 8 September 1943, asked too much of the country and of the army, under the illusion—which was common to both liberals and fascists—that we were really a Great Power. They do not attempt to estimate more exactly and in a more balanced way men and events in history. No, a dispassionate analysis is not enough. They have to show that every sacrifice was in vain, that the survivors must regret what they did and should be ashamed of having fought, that the army was always inadequate when put to the test, and that all its leaders were at once bloodthirsty and cowardly.[6]

I HAVE NOW REACHED the most delicate and complex point, that of fascism and anti-fascism. This is where my own generation, without humiliating itself or becoming hysterically repentant, must examine itself and admit its own mistakes, sincerely, fairly. Let me note, first of all, that most of the ruling class in Italy today consists of men the youngest of whom are approaching fifty, the oldest of whom are already about seventy, born between the beginning of the century and the years in which fascism was definitively established (1900–1930). The fact that there is a very slow turnover of men in Italy's high places makes the matter of their age very significant; indeed it can almost be called a permanent fact in the life-story and in the psychological development of those who have, or will have, positions of command in our social and political life.

The painful way in which our recent history has developed has made it inevitable that the opposition between fascism and anti-fascism is kept alive, and even invigorated. "Fascism", as the Catholic writer Del Noce has acutely observed, has taken over the role once occupied in theology by the devil as a symbol of evil, a way to perdition, lurking at least as a potentiality in every person and human action. But, to avoid confusion, I will for the present stick to historical fascism, the only aspect of it that can be known and defined precisely, and will merely remind the reader of the importance of the memories and images which that movement, which has now been dead for over thirty years as an organised party, left behind.

Even today, I suggest, a wide section of the Italian ruling class, political or non-political, received its education under the fascist régime, and in many cases had its decisive experiences during that period (even though they may have been experiences which produced revulsion and disaffection). This is a detail which is not often remembered, and is now carefully omitted from any biography, formal or informal. The omission is due, not so much to the passing of time, as to the survival in almost everyone (myself included) of the fears, opportunism, and shame of the years immediately after World War II.

No serious discussion of this has ever taken place. The almost general absolution which, in the post-War period, the anti-fascist parties without exception gave to those in their thirties and twenties at the time (and even to those in their forties and fifties) was the result not of a

[5] I was much struck by the opposite tendency—that is, one of uncritical exaltation of the country's past—in the Soviet film version of Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, in which even the defeats of the Tsarist army and all the military mistakes of the Russian generals opposing Napoleon are recalled in an epic, or at least a solemn and respectful, manner.

[6] What I have said here applies to a number of ways in which history is written today, by hard-line Marxists and angry Catholics, utopian radicals and certain reactionaries. These views have a strong following among journalists, and inspire reviews, articles, and features. But their vitality, their critical usefulness, and their value in revising ideas are all exhausted: all that is left is the basis of their belief, which is deliberately polemical and destructive. Then there is serious historical writing, which, although critical, is balanced; this is quite unlike the kind of thing I have been criticising.

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calm examination of general circumstances, or of the particular case in question, but of a kind of tacit agreement reached between the real anti-fascists (who were not very numerous) and the many ex-fascists, repentant or unrepentant. The post-War political parties had an interest in addressing Italians as they found them, or as they had been, without putting too fine a moralistic point upon it. Organisations had to be built up out of movements which until then had been small, shut in, as they necessarily were, in the catacombs of conspiracy and isolation, or far away in exile. The mass of the bourgeoisie—upper, middle, or lower, consisting of managers, civil servants, entrepreneurs, intellectuals, officers, magistrates, and so on—found it suited them to be forgiven, more or less tacitly, and to enrol under new banners. It was the meeting of two convergent interests. In any case, what else could be done?

By saying this, I do not want in any way to deny that generous feelings, genuine and sincere expectations of freedom and social renewal, honest devotion to the public interest, moved a number—and no small number—of one-time fascists. That particular time in our history, it seems to me, may not have been at all farcical, as so many people who want to turn every part of our national history into comedy maintain that it was. It was a period of zig-zag changes of direction but also of tragedies, sacrifices, and real courage. Fascism was hated when it fell, not just because it had lost the war, but because it had lost it in that way, because it had tarnished the honour of those in the forces, sending men to be butchered without any preparedness. It had sacrificed the whole country, and its end was greeted with relief and genuine hope. The resistance, after the shame and disasters of 8 September, was indeed a chapter of courage and resolution. Unfortunately the sceptical, suspicious attitude of many Italians and the overemphasis and exaggerations of others make it hard to set in its proper place—that is, in a worthy context of Italian merit, something that is always questioned, and regarded with irony and contempt.

The fact remains, quite apart from any historical or human explanation, that this lack of sincerity prevented any open clarification. *La capacità mimetica*, the capacity for camouflage of one-time fascists, who relearnt the lessons taught by our history to any number of generations, was favourably regarded by the anti-fascists who quickly switched from the threat of absurd rigour to promises of total absolution (at least of their own friends and colleagues).

The tendency among ex-fascists was to draw some line between good and evil which would put them on the side of the angels. Some said it was right to punish racialists, or the supporters of Mussolini's short-lived Salò republic, or those violent and corrupt men from every period—and to be indulgent towards the rest. Others wished to be harsh with the old, but not with the young.

In the end everyone (or almost everyone, and even the worst) was in fact forgiven. After the first thunderings of *l'epurazione*, the clean-up of fascists turned into an amnesty. A few years after 25 April 1943, the Salò party was born again among us practically undisturbed, and it lives and prospers more than ever. To plan to dissolve it now would be a political absurdity; it would give the Social Movement the halo of persecution, a halo that in practice would weigh very lightly upon it, at least as long as a liberal society existed, but that from the juridical and political point of view would be no less damaging for this reason.[7]

AN ENTIRE GENERATION—with the exception of a few special cases whose value is, above all, one of moral example (the intransigent; those who "had understood"; and, which was much rarer, those who had behaved consistently)—had to take up new positions. They might or might not believe them, but in any case they had totally different attitudes, and perhaps hopes, from those of a few years earlier. Many, especially those who made the switch from pre-War fascism to post-War anti-fascism with little difficulty and no danger, derived from this a sense of emptiness and a moral frailty that could hardly fail to influence feeling towards the state, the country, and Italian public life.

The inverted patriotism of older people comes partly from this. Since fascism had misused patriotism grotesquely, indeed disastrously, it seemed only natural to do the very opposite, that is to overturn the outlook that had prevailed during the recent past. I am not confusing the obvious mistake into which people fell at the time. I am describing, not arguing. And I would add that the presence of anti-patriotism, or at

[7] It is strange that it is the historiography of the fascist period that has made great progress in the past few years—thanks, above all, to the books of Renzo De Felice. [See François Bondy, "Arguing about Fascism", ENCOUNTER (December 1975).]

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least of non-patriotism, is not derived merely from the deliberate decision to do the opposite of what had been done before. It was also the spontaneous result of the *vuoto dentro*, the inner emptiness, which the experience of fascism had left in most of those who were young at the time.

FROM THE FIRST YEARS after the Allied liberation until the end of the 1950s, this emptiness was in some ways compensated for, or at least did not make itself felt. There were serious, immediate things to be done, and the will to tackle them was suddenly clear and strong. From the harsh political struggles of the post-War years, from the rebuilding of every national activity which demanded intense and exhausting work from everyone, often with little reward in a country that was still very poor, from the hundred and one problems of everyday life, there emerged many reasons for hard and continual commitment. All energy was called upon and absorbed and little time was left for brooding. This, too, was a time of drama and exaltation, and the historic stimulus was so challenging that it prevailed over personal weakness.

In those years the world offered images, hopes, governmental systems, models and ideals of life that could take the place of patriotic feeling, and even make it live again in new forms. The European movement, the *europeismo* which grew out of anti-fascist aspirations, was born in those days as an inspiring ideal, and was nearly always linked with admiration for and faith in America, the generous, rich, powerful and free protector of the ruined old continent. The Church, which appeared as solid as a fortress, was dominated by the medieval figure of Pius XII, and was the guide and support of the most important Italian political movement. Other minority groups (to which I also belonged, although not as a card-carrying member) sought encouragement and examples in Britain above all, which had passed from the glory of Churchill to the fascinating experience of the Labour government. Britain, alas, opposed the idea of a united Europe, the only new political idea which had circulated in Italy since the War.

On the opposite side, and with a barricade down the middle along which people were ready to start shooting, the Soviet Union, victorious in the War, and governed by the rigid, ferocious hand of Stalin, was for many Italians, not all of them communists, a symbol to be acclaimed and a social model to be copied. Over and above all this, a link between the two sides in the open conflict between opposed ideals, there emerged a faith in modern technology, in a way of working and of producing that had scarcely been known in Italy before. Technology directed people's energies towards a new myth, the myth of economic development and the well-being of the masses, with incomes and prosperity increasing year by year and heralding the end of poverty.

THESE FEELINGS, often rather unfocused but sometimes affirmed and defended with sacrifice and risk, tended to take the place of our debilitated patriotism. Were they substitutes for it? They were, in the sense that no people can find moral strength and sincere attachment to an ideal outside itself. They were not, on the other hand, because they were part of a praiseworthy effort to make relationships with Europe and with the whole outside world, and to find elsewhere a stimulus and an inspiration now lacking in ourselves. It was hoped that in this way what Luigi Einaudi had said in an old book to explain his "Anglophilia" would come about in the end: foreign examples and experiences would be transplanted to our own country, but in such a way that we could sincerely use them, and make them flourish in our own soil. In order to achieve this, what was needed was the attachment to Italy and the trust in ourselves that had been so seriously weakened and that did not return and show themselves with the vigour that was needed.

IN TWENTY YEARS the external ideals and the substitutes for patriotism I have described have one by one grown weaker. Europe has not been united; and it is hard to make a new, more painful effort when the small amount of economic (or rather customs) unity which we have managed to achieve, to the great advantage of us all, is already creaking. The image of America no longers gleams as it did in the days of the Marshall Plan and the beginning of the Atlantic Alliance. The Church is now torn apart and weakened. Britain has finally lined up with us continentals, but only when too many crises have revealed her disastrous economic condition. The Soviet Union has lost in attraction—after the death of Stalin, the brutal Khrushchev-Brezhnev military intervention—what it has gained militarily and politically. It is no longer a myth or a model, but merely a colossal centre of power.

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Even the passion for modern technology has quickly faded, and we now see the damage and dangers it brings rather more than the advantages. The myth of prosperity and economic development has tended to fade into the pure selfishness of groups and individuals, and in its place there is great fear, on ecological grounds. Nor can substitutes for these old substitutes—such as Mao's China, which is far away and mysterious, and unable to arouse any rational imitations in Europe; or guerrilla fighters from Latin America, like Che Guevara (that is, in a climate very different from that of a free industrial country)—be any use.

Thus the void in politics and ideals, which the great examples of the 1940s and '50s managed to fill, has revealed itself for what it was, and what it still is: *una malattia*. A sickness that is moral, above all; a clouding of conscience and a paralysis of the will. It is opportunism, too: a race without brakes or guidelines towards any position considered advantageous at a particular moment. People at the moment are generally going Left, because personal advantage urges them to do so. But they would turn Right just as casually, if it seemed opportune; and it is quite possible that in the future not a few will turn in that direction. Italy's "Guicciardini Man", so reviled by De Sanctis, lives again in each generation.

WHO WILL EVER BE ABLE to write the history of the double game in Italy? I remember one fascist leader of a large city in the South (though he himself came from the North) talking like a defeatist in the early months of 1943, and during air raids he remarked: "They'll be the ruin of us!" They? That is, the fascist leaders, not excluding himself, presumably.

It could be said that in absolute, authoritarian régimes, whether ancient or modern, there is always a double game being played. It was very common in Nazi Germany, even among the Prussian generals who were considered examples of courage and a strict sense of duty. It is easy to imagine that the dictator, like the sovereign once upon a time, has bows when he is looking and noses thumbed at him when he is not. Khrushchev, who danced obediently when Stalin called the tune, must surely have confided to his intimates, or at least to himself, his own sense of bitterness, his own anxiety. It is shabby behaviour but authoritarian régimes make it inevitable and common. We surely must not criticise only our own people for this and call it "typically Italian." Guicciardini Man is everywhere.

We should ask ourselves, instead, why this double game continues to be played even today, in a free society that makes criticism and opposition possible without too many risks. Yet one often hears Christian Democrat deputies criticising their own party, even openly, in offices and drawing-rooms, and then keeping quiet in assemblies and meetings.

Often a minister will call for "the support of public opinion" to prevent the approval or application of some measure in the government's programme, which he himself has accepted in official discussions (or at least allowed to pass in silence without a gesture of criticism or any reservations). Top-level civil servants appear servile to ministers and then harshly critical, even in the presence of outsiders, behind their backs. People up to the neck in shady deals will tell the journalist who is asking for justice and probity: "How right you are! Dishonest people should all be in gaol!" Intellectuals looking for jobs or fame or money, or all three, are hung up between Rome and Moscow, one foot in the Communist camp, the other in the Catholic, legs wide apart but without fear of rupturing themselves, because they, like their backbone, are made of elastic rubber.

The double game sometimes stretches through time and has a number of phases. Right today, Left tomorrow, Centre the day after. White today, black tomorrow, grey, red or green the day after. One's head spins at the sight of these political characters, these free-floating intellectuals, yet they know all too well just where they are going. One thing they know for certain: where their own interest lies. Sometimes it advises them to oppose the government, sometimes to support it, sometimes to combine the two in some clever way. Rarely does it suggest a sincere attitude, a disinterested judgment, a criticism that seeks to be objective. In this way the double game becomes a kind of changeable conformity, quickly adaptable to changing circumstances and breathlessly anticipating future changes. It is the proof of our lack of a moral centre that can inspire the state and society of Italy.

In our collective life there is no point upon which the feelings of the majority converge spontaneously (or even, in many cases, under pressure to conform). This centre of national life, although weakened, survives in France, in

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Britain, in the smaller countries of Western Europe, and has re-established itself among the West Germans in the Federal Republic. In Italy, though, the republic has not managed to do what the monarchy did in the years after the unification of the country; when the minorities of the Risorgimento at least accepted the dynasty of Savoy, made ready to serve the country in the best possible way, and managed to hold it together and take it forward to achieve some slow progress. The enthusiasm with which the direct heirs of these minorities, themselves minorities to this day, flung themselves into the First World War, sacrificing themselves without hesitation, is proof of an attachment and a sincerity that now seem to have vanished entirely.[8]

THERE IS LITTLE POINT in discussing the reasons for this fatal weakness. It may be that it comes from the inability of Italian Catholics to form and organise a state, to bring a republic to birth. It may be that the Communist *secessio plebis*, in its effort to build a different state, a régime without freedom behind the screen of constitutional and legalitarian conformity, gave a mortal blow to the republic from the very start. And of course the forces of the Resistance, unlike those of the Risorgimento (whether the King's, or Garibaldi's, or Mazzini's) remained divided and sometimes even openly hostile to one another, refusing to allow themselves to be absorbed into the new state.

In our country there is no central point which its people recognise as the symbol and link of their Italian unity, which they are ready to sacrifice themselves for, in order to defend the general good. A little more than thirty years ago, in the darkest moment of our national history, many thousands of Italians preferred to sacrifice themselves rather than betray their oath as soldiers, in spite of the shameful dissolution of the supreme command and of nearly all the other high commands. We need to know what would happen now, in similar circumstances. Was the dying Monarchy—dying, what is more, through its own fault—stronger than the Republic in full vigour?[9]

Perhaps the response to old patriotism, based on sacrifice and duty and on "military prowess and service", which has now almost disappeared even as a feeling among strong minorities, is scarcely understandable to our contemporaries, particularly the youngest of them, or even quite incomprehensible. Many of them find a whiff of the barracks about it, or a nostalgia for fascism, or for loyalty to the monarch, or something of the sort. The old lack of martial spirit among Italians—which the great Florentine historians of the 16th century described as one of the reasons for our moral and political decline and the resultant leadership of outsiders—has now become obvious. In the world as it is, and as it is going to be, it is an illusion to believe, and a fraud to make others believe, that we can do without viable armies. Let us hope that our frivolity and improvidence will not be harshly punished yet again.

But I realise that the great majority of our countrymen are suspicious of armies, and neither the monarchy, with its kings always in uniform and its generals always on horseback, nor fascism with its grotesqueries managed to overcome this suspicion—indeed, they ended by reinforcing it. Italian patriotism, if it wishes to hold its head high, after the upheavals of the past decades, will have to transform itself and become, above all, a matter of civic sense and social discipline, prepared to spread a respect for the law, and an obedience to national solidarity, among the people. But this kind of feeling is even rarer among us than the military spirit, and even harder to put into practice because it demands widespread agreement and commitment in everyday life. And from all this, we are still a very long way. What I have called our *patriottismo capovolto*, our upended patriotism, will not vanish overnight.

FROM ALL I HAVE SAID SO FAR, the reader will surmise that I myself see the reasons—deep or superficial, ephemeral or lasting—that have brought about our sense of defeat and our lack of self-confidence. I do not deny their existence; I am not seeking to replace one kind of rhetoric with another, or one sort of exaggeration with its opposite. I merely maintain that the tone of

[8] This needs to be said, whatever one may think of the rightness of our Italian involvement in the First World War.

[9] Contrary to what is often thought, the lack of military spirit—that is, of discipline, of organisational capacity, and of efficiency in training—should not be confused with cowardice, individual or collective. In Italy the *spirito militare* has always been little in evidence, but there have always been plenty of brave, decisive men; and the troops, when well commanded, have always known how to fight. This was seen even after 8 September 1943.

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triumphant pessimism is often hateful and excessive, and that if we want to save Italy we must reverse this destructive tendency.

It is possible to start from hard facts and build up something full of obvious absurdities. It is possible to move from accurate, and at the start useful and true, details, and wind up with useless abstractions. Upended patriotism that becomes dogma and induces a new sort of conformity is one of those absurdities which, as I have explained, starts from real facts and ends in abstractions. In this case, more importantly, it is a case of pitiless abstractions.

The *Italia sacra* of D'Annunzio's speeches did not exist. Today the *Italia diabolica* of the new rhetorical conformists does not exist, either. We have many faults, but we have virtues as well. Human warmth and sympathy, which Italians have shown they possess in the deepest sense and which they arouse in others, have not disappeared. Nor have we lost entirely our vitality, our ability to get things done when necessity urges us to, or the fancy takes us.

Many of the vices we attribute to ourselves, more often rightly than wrongly, are the fruit of human nature, or characteristic of the modern age, and exist elsewhere. Many of the virtues which we think we have, and perhaps do have, are ours and ours alone. No other European people has had so little tenacity and enthusiasm in times of persecution; and no one has shown so much sympathy and such a charitable spirit towards the persecuted.

We should be appealing to our good qualities, and keeping our faults in check. In the last few years we have been doing the very opposite. It may be that this tendency will continue, that we are moving towards another very serious crisis, or even towards disaster. In the end—no one can say when, but certainly not at once—the wheel will turn full circle and Italy will once again show its positive face, as has happened every now and then in the dramatic course of its history. On that day, at least for an historic moment, the *patriottismo capovolto* with all its inversions and perversions will be overcome.

Joe

I went to your house once,
Up some stairs (was it a flat?)
With a number of boys, my brother's friends.
Three decades since.

Joe's birthday.
They sat on tables, drinking something fizzy—
What daring celebration!—while I hid
Out in the kitchen, trying to be busy.

But you came out—oh, I remember that!—
Rough-looking, humorous, and spoke gently,
And found me a still drink
And didn't blame me for being a girl.

Babies look over their fathers' arms in the park
And pass altogether into what they see.
The old slide into the foss of memory.
Between whiles, we must hold the two apart.

When I see bubbles rise in lemonade,
I sometimes think of feeling shy, afraid,
But sometimes watch them as a second hand
Constantly passing, like my prints in sand.

Jenny King

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Kenneth Minogue

The Guru

Thoughts after Reading Carlos Castaneda

Is it only nakedness that distinguishes man from other apes? Aristotle thought that rationality and language made the difference. The capacity to laugh and an addiction to swallowing medicines are typical of a vast number of other suggested *differentiae*. But anyone taking a cool look at contemporary humanity could hardly escape the thought that man is an advice-seeking animal. What shall I do?—better: what*ever* shall I do?—is the archetypal human question; and ever since the Christian Church began to shed the burden of human freedom a complex and specialised industry has grown up to supply the need. Miss Lonelyhearts and Sigmund Freud are sob-sisters under the skin. In advice-giving circles, the unadvised man is found to be as deplorable as was the masterless man of early mediaeval times.

"It's amazing, but people assume that selecting the right man for the job is just one of those things that they can do", a psychologist remarked recently in peddling his just published "technique for interviews." These advisers—the counsellors counselling and the probation officers probing—are all indigenous Western figures who tend to transpose all problems into matters of technique. For the most part, they confine themselves to giving advice on some specialised area of life. It is this relative modesty which marks off indigenously Western advisers from the increasingly popular Eastern figure: the Guru.

The guru is typically concerned not just with imparting knowledge, but with transforming lives. What he requires of his followers is total submission not to knowledge but to a Way or Path. Any critical response exhibited by the followers is likely to be construed as an unregenerate element of the mechanical personality. To follow a guru is to embark on a voyage in which the only compass point is the master himself.

The attractions of the guru can no doubt be traced back to the beginnings of Western self-distaste in the 18th century, but the more celebrated gurus only began to make a splash towards the end of the 19th. India was, so far as this particular diffusion is concerned, the guru's original homeland, and the most romantic account of what a guru could do for you was given in Somerset Maugham's *The Razor's Edge*. The most recently fashionable guru has appeared in a series of books written by Carlos Castaneda, and is an Indian of a different kind. The actual details of Castaneda's odyssey are by now well known, particularly among the young who have made Castaneda's books world-wide best-sellers.

Castaneda's four volumes[1] (appearing between 1968 and 1975) purport to be an account of his lengthy submission to the Yaqui shaman don Juan. Castaneda encountered don Juan when he was seeking information about the medicinal plants used by the Indians of the south-west United States. He soon became don Juan's disciple, and his first book is a selection of field notes, in chronological order, reporting conversations with don Juan, reports of experiences resulting from taking hallucinogenic drugs, and reflections of analyses of this material. What Castaneda takes to emerge from it all is something he calls "the Yaqui way of knowledge", where

Kenneth Minogue *of the London School of Economics is currently Visiting Research Fellow in the History of Ideas Unit at the Australian National University.*

[1] Carlos Castaneda, *The Teachings of don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge*. University of California Press, $7.95, paper $2.45; £4.40, Penguin 60p. *A Separate Reality: Further Conversations with don Juan*. Simon & Schuster, $6.95, paper $2.95; Bodley Head, £2.25; Penguin, 60p. *Journey to Ixtlan: Last Lessons of don Juan*. Simon & Schuster, $6.95, paper $2.95; Bodley Head, £2.25, Penguin, 60p. *Tales of Power*. Simon & Schuster, $7.95; Hodder & Stoughton, £3.50.

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Yaqui refers to the tribe of Indians to whom don Juan belongs.

In principle, then, Castaneda is a student and inquirer rather than the disciple of a guru; and certainly in his account of his meetings he maintains something of a critical and rational attitude. But this is not to be taken entirely at its face value, partly because there is some doubt about whether don Juan is a real rather than an invented personage, and partly because the drift of the whole enterprise appears to be to commend don Juan's beliefs and practices as capable of giving access to a reality which we are denied. Most Western observers would regard many of don Juan's beliefs as primitive sorcery. Castaneda, as an anthropologist, would take them entirely seriously as the practices of a culture. But Castaneda as the writer of four best-selling books is doing something different again.

THE VERY TERMS in which his enterprise is broached need to be considered with care. To talk of Yaqui knowledge would raise the question of whether Yaqui beliefs were true or false; and it may well be the case that the Yaqui know all sorts of things, especially in herbal matters, that Western science does not know. To talk of a "way of knowledge", however, puts that question to one side. Ways, paths, and other directional impedimenta are among the more obvious equipment of the average guru, and quite astonishing things can be done with them. Thus Peregrine Worsthorne recorded recently his astonishment, not to say rage, when on a recent trip to China he heard a Party functionary propose a toast to the Free Press, commenting that Britain and China have different "ways" of press freedom. Ways can turn black into white, and need watching.

Gurus, then, are teachers not of knowledge but of ways and paths, and the very word "knowledge" is misleading because what gurus have to offer is less a matter of truths than of new perceptions, variations of consciousness, or new sensations.

Consider, for example, a typical guru's doctrine from one of the more interesting practitioners of the art, P. D. Ouspensky:

> "We always think and act as though we knew the truth. This is lying.... The first lie we tell ourselves is when we say 'I'. It is a lie because in saying 'I' we presume certain things: we presume a certain unity and a certain power.... Being surrounded by these lies, born and educated in these lies, we cannot be any different from what we are; we are just the result, the product of this lying."[2]

[2] *The Fourth Way* (1957), pp. 30–31.
[3] Kenneth Walker, *A Study of Gurdjieff's Teaching* (1957), pp. 73–74.

Years after encountering this doctrine, one of Ouspensky's more prominent disciples came across David Hume's argument in the *Treatise* that the human self is "nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with inconceivable rapidity, and are in perpetual flux and movement." Dr Kenneth Walker[3] decided that Hume's was a formulation of the same idea he had learned from Ouspensky; but in an important way he was wrong. Gurus are different from philosophers, and there is about the aggressive manner of Ouspensky's formulation a feature entirely foreign to Hume's reasoning. Ouspensky seeks to use this relatively commonplace idea as a revelation which will shake his disciples and transform their lives. The capacity to induce such revelations is an important part of the ascendancy of the guru over the disciple. The use of doctrines in this way is, of course, found in many areas of life, most notably today perhaps in ideological politics; but in its purest form it is found in the practices of Zen masters.

It is characteristic of the guru, then, to work upon the whole personality of the disciple. He is not just teaching them new things, but remodelling their perceptual and emotional responses. And if he is to achieve the necessary ascendancy, he must be regarded as infallible. What this means is that the disciples must take everything he does, even his apparent moments of irritation or human weakness, as being part of a continuous process of teaching. Nothing is redundant; everything will be interpreted in a constructive sense. It is axiomatic that everything the guru does is under his control.

One consequence of this common feature of gurus is that the disciples are usually worried, anxious people whereas the guru often bubbles over with gaiety—indeed, remembering the celebrated giggle of the Maharishi Mahesh Yoga, one is tempted to say "with transcendental gaiety." Gurdjieff was prone in this way to subject his followers to all manner of amusing caprices; and Alan Brien, in reviewing the most recent work in the Castaneda cycle, was reduced to cataloguing the number of times don Juan burst into derisive laughter, slapped his thighs, and otherwise expressed his mirth.

UNTIL RECENTLY, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN indisputable that the guru was essentially a foreign import. For one of the most usual beliefs about a guru is that he belongs to a higher realm of being than that of ordinary humanity, and any such role in a Christian civilisation had already been decisively pre-empted. Those who attempted to make superhuman claims staggered under the burden of heresy. The ascendancy of priests over

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their flocks may often be considerable; but priests and clergymen are bound to a theology and to institutional disciplines. Psychoanalysts may often totally dominate their patients and seek to transform their lives but they are denied the possibility of being the proprietors of profound secrets (one of the commoner ways in which gurus attain their ascendancy) by their claims to scientific status. Philosophers and other academic teachers must explain themselves to pupils who are assumed to be fundamentally on the same level as the teachers. Hence the great guru-hunger which has led to the current spiritual Disneyland in the West has been unmistakably satisfied from sources outside our own culture, even when the experience of discipledom has been intelligently packaged for a technologically oriented public, as with the adaptations of Occultist thought by Gurdjieff and Ouspensky.

ALTHOUGH THE GURU is an exotic outsider the actual techniques he uses are by no means foreign to the West. The foreignness of the techniques is exaggerated so long as we seek to understand the guru in the context of religion and popular philosophy. For the teacher of any *practical* skill often behaves in exactly the same way as gurus do. His business is to impel students to do things, often unpleasant things, whose point the pupil cannot at this stage understand. Some acts of obedience may be commanded for no other purpose than to enhance the authority of the teacher himself. The practices of gurus are strikingly reminiscent of marine sergeants licking into shape a platoon of rookies who will soon face the tests of war. The sheer caprice, brutality, and insistence on unthinking and instant obedience turn out to be essential in later situations. And this makes it clear that the main point about the guru is that he is a practical rather than an intellectual figure. The move from "knowledge" to "ways of knowledge" is a move from theory to practice. Some of our own academics may behave a little like gurus, but when they do, they have taken a holiday from their academic commitment.

The kind of knowledge gurus possess is fundamentally the diagnosis and cure of the disease of being human. A common conviction of modern Europeans is that they are "spiritually crippled." Their sensibility is dissociated; they suffer from alienation; they have not realised the possibilities of spiritual evolution, or the mechanical routines of modern life have suffocated some vital spark within. There is no end to ways in which the disease may be described; but each observation refers to a similar observation of our complex human state. The fact that some three thousand years ago the ancient Hebrews already believed themselves cursed and expelled from paradise might have been expected to modify at least the element of self-pity in the belief that *modern* man is the specific sufferer from this disease.

Religion is, of course, the arena in which these preoccupations have normally been discussed and contained. Hence it is that many humanists and progressives, abandoning Christianity, took the option of denying that there was any disease at all. Man was evolving towards moral perfection; indeed, some of the more intrepid spirits took the view that religion, far from being the cure, was in fact the disease itself, and that man would become whole if only he would throw away the crutches of wish-fulfilment and stand on his own two feet.

THE CULT OF THE GURU needs to be understood in terms of those who abandoned organised religion yet remained preoccupied by the condition to which religions respond. Some of these attributed the disease not to man himself but to the structure of the society in which he lived, thus giving the idea of revolution its unmistakably salvationist aura. These men invented ideologies, and they have prospered mightily. The Occultist solution to the problem is different from the Ideological, and in a sense far more radical. It consists in saying that the ordinary world we live in, the world of rational and regular connections between physical bodies, is merely the response to a *part* of reality by a *part* of ourselves. This is why we seem spiritually crippled and barren. Beyond what we have learned to perceive is a realm of phenomena which are occasionally glimpsed if we are specially attuned to see. Techniques of attunement will allow us human fragments (or more usually, some of us) at last to take on our full stature as men and women.

Just as the ideological project of liberation from our shackles has thrown up a multitude of mutually antipathetic sects, so too has Occultism. Particular variants of each type of belief necessarily compete for the same audience. Ideological sects reserve their fiercest contempt for each other rather than for the deluded bourgeois beyond the pale (for "bourgeois" has the technical sense in all ideologies of referring to the unregenerate enemy); and Occultism is full of teachers and groups with a noticeable tendency to anathematise their competitors as deceiving fakes who muddy the pure stream of truth with their superstitious babblings.

Within this general framework, the impulses behind Occultism are extremely various. The dream of magical power is usually a central theme. Thus the search for the power of communicating with the dead produces Spiritualism

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and an involvement with ghosts, often bolstered by theories of astral and other strange sorts of "body." A preoccupation with knowing the future produces fortune telling, and was a strong component of the omens, auguries, and oracles which dominated classical religion. Alchemy has a long and respectable history as the attempt to obtain power over substances, and illustrates very well the characteristic Occultist combination of sophistication and superstition. For it may be concerned either with transforming the soul, or with vulgar external matters like getting rich and powerful. Magic and sorcery may describe petty-minded attempts to encompass one's ends (like the mysterious death of enemies), or it may be concerned with self-purification. There are two levels of Occultism, which we might describe as the vulgar and the elevated; or which we may distinguish according to whether the aim is to enhance our power over the world, or to transform our own character and understanding for the better. What this means is that Occultism is, in different ways, a competitor with science and with religion.

FROM THE 17TH CENTURY onwards, the progress of that heterogeneous and complicated tradition of thought we call "science" (not to be confused with that lesser part of it with which philosophers deal when they study the logic of science) has depended upon an unyielding hostility to Occultism in any form; and this hostility has been reciprocated. Paradoxically, however, modern science became capable in time of feats that would have made legendary any Renaissance magus. The wonders of magic, for all their romance, are insignificant in comparison with modern technological transformations. But these transformations have concerned only the lesser level of Occultist preoccupation: power over *nature*. They have had no effect upon the human heart. The hope of moral progress to partner that of technology has indeed been consistently entertained, but its frustration has left the way open for Occultism to continue as a kind of intellectual underworld, and made possible the modest resurgence of its ideas that we see taking place today.

But if we look a little closer, we shall see that the paradox commonly noted in the histories—that science has achieved triumphs beyond the dreams of magic—is less paradoxical than it seems. For one thing the 17th-century slogan that "knowledge is power" strongly suggests that science abandoned the techniques of magic rather than its ends. For another, progress was thought to depend upon a process of purification of the mind from the debris of earlier learning, a process which itself seems to have an interestingly occult character. And these considerations are reinforced by the close involvement of science and Occultist ideas during the Renaissance period, an involvement familiar in different ways in the careers of Kepler and Bacon.

CHRISTIANITY, BY CONTRAST, has often been hostile to dreams of power as a form of pride. It therefore tended to attack science and Occultism alike. Both seemed to deny or to ignore man's fallen condition and to direct attention away from the only remedy recognised by the Church: faith in God. Hence it was that the only theologically respectable versions of Occultist experience in Christian life took the form of religious mysticism. The condition of such respectability was that the transformation of the soul could be identified with the workings of God. Sometimes this identification fell apart, and many heretics persecuted by the Church were mystics whose spiritual journeyings had led to blasphemous pronouncements.[4]

Modern Occultism results largely from the dissolution of the always unstable connection between Occultist ideas and religious orthodoxy, and is composed of a vast number of ideas which have been circulating for many millennia. Sometimes a little surface exoticism is derived from science fiction (the notion of Jesus as a space-traveller, for example), and in most versions the technicalities have been given a modern veneer. But it seems safe to say that very little has fundamentally changed.

CARLOS CASTANEDA has produced his own particular version of these ideas. His immense popularity derives also from several novelties of his presentation. One of these is, of course, that he is himself an enigmatic figure who is seldom interviewed—and when he is, supplies false information about his own past. A guru (even a guru who writes himself up as an apprentice) knows better than most men that there is a war between those who write books and those who criticise and review them. Writers wish to emphasise their uniqueness, reviewers assimilate books and men to convenient categories. (This very ENCOUNTER article is itself a skirmish in such a war.)

Castaneda has also given a powerful legitimacy to the currently popular use of drugs as one possible escape from this prison we call our life. His own view of the importance of drugs in the making of a man of knowledge oddly parallels the fashion for drugs in the Western world—

[4] The execution of the Sufi mystic Al Hallaj in Baghdad in A.D. 922 reminds us that a similar situation obtained within Islam.

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The Teachings of don Juan appeared at the height of the drug cult and connects hallucinogenic experience with a deeper experience of reality. It is perhaps incidental that by the time *Tales of Power* appeared drugs had passed from fashion, and Castaneda had discovered that:

> "The extraordinary effect that psychotropic plants had had on me was what gave me the bias that their use was the key feature of the teachings. I held on to that conviction and it was only in the later years of my apprenticeship that I realized that the meaningful transformations and findings of sorcerers were always done in states of sober consciousness." (*Tales of Power*, p. 238).

Drugs are essentially a mechanical stimulus, and it would have made Casteneda a less interesting exponent of Occultism if he had stayed with them. Indeed, part of the tedium of the early stages of the teachings derives from the fact that so much is concerned with describing merely personal drug-induced sensations.

Castaneda has also introduced a relatively new angle of Occultist vision, making it derive from the practice of sorcerers among an unsophisticated group of Mexican Indians. The great vogue for Occultism in the West over the last century has usually been derived from Eastern illumination: from Buddhist, Hindu, or Islamic masters; and the grand civilisation in which these religions are embedded have given a necessary grandeur to what has been accepted. For one of the commonest of Occultist beliefs is that man himself is largely a mechanical and uncreative beast whose civilisations and religions are but a scrambled version of what has been taught by superhuman gurus in earlier times. Particular contemporary Occultist beliefs are often thought to be the pure doctrine from which all else derives; and not infrequently the guru himself is thought to be a member of this superhuman company. Castaneda has not followed this option (though there are hints at various points that it could be incorporated without difficulty). He has found the possibilities of higher being among people whom it is relevant to note might be regarded as noble savages, unspoilt by the rat-race of urban sophistication. But don Juan himself, we learn, is perfectly at ease even wearing a suit in Mexico City.

CASTANEDA'S APPRENTICESHIP to don Juan lasts for over ten years and is described in four volumes. It can best be described in terms of what sort of experience Castaneda must blot out, and what sort of experience he must learn to let in.

Castaneda has to be taught to break his educated habit of trying to explain everything. For explanation is concerned with the world as we conveniently *describe* it to ourselves: it is a world of fixed connections and solid material bodies. Such a description is acquired very early in a child's life, and his acquisition of it marks the stages of his membership of the human community. "For don Juan, then", Castaneda tells us in *Journey to Ixtlan*,

> "the reality of our day-to-day life consists of an endless flow of perceptual interpretations which we, the individuals who share a specific *membership*, have learned to make in common."

This process of learning encourages the use of some kinds of perception to the detriment of other things that we might "see", and it is perpetually reinforced by the incessant internal dialogue we have with ourselves. Castaneda is entirely in the Occultist tradition in appropriating the ordinary vocabulary of perception for technical use. Indeed, most of *A Separate Reality* is taken up with "the task of 'seeing'." The sorcerer as don Juan describes him apprehends the world not only in the ordinary way but also "with his nose, or his tongue, or his will, especially with his will", and the results are different from what we think of as reality:

> "When we perceive the world with our will we know that it is not as 'out there' or as 'real' as we think." (*A Separate Reality*, p. 155.)

The point of most Occultist meditation is to cleanse the mind of the debris created by our perceptual habits so that it may attain the passivity which allows it to "see" beyond the limits of our communally described world. There is a well-known Zen saying which puts the belief with the utmost economy: "Avoiding thought, all appears." Castaneda has to learn how not to probe the limited world he perceives with the questions he habitually employs, and in the early stages his perceptual explorations are given a boost by drugs. Don Juan also employs technical devices designed to prevent awareness from slipping back into the reality we take for granted: "wearing a black cap, tying my left shoelace first, or fastening my belt from right to left." Castaneda's mental life must be entirely transformed so that things become possible to him which were inconceivable before. The secret of it all is the direction of one's attention. As don Juan tells him:

> "All of this exists only because of our attention. This very rock where we're sitting is a rock because we have been forced to give our attention to it as a rock."

It is only in the last volume that the point of many things in his earlier apprenticeship becomes evident. It is all a matter of breaking out of the trap we have made for ourselves:

> "We are perceivers. We are an awareness; we are not objects; we have no solidity. We are boundless.

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> The world of objects and solidity is a way of making our passage on earth convenient. It is only a description that was created to help us. We, or rather our *reason*, forget that the description is only a description and thus we entrap the totality of ourselves in a vicious circle from which we rarely emerge in our lifetime."

REASON LIMITS. This is a central part of the message of Castaneda's apprenticeship, and it is a part which cannot but be of nervous interest to modern educated men. One doubt which will soon afflict any educated reader is whether Castaneda, for all his possible qualifications as an anthropologist, actually knows what reason and logic are. At one point in the culmination of his learning, Castaneda has to construe the fact that his "benefactor" don Genaro suddenly appears before him, and he works out that the appearance has been arranged by don Juan as a kind of trick. This attempt at explanation is described in rapid succession as "my logical explanatory scheme" "my logical scheme", and "my rational structure" (*Tales of Power*, pp. 45–48). Logic is not in fact involved, and to identify one possible hypothesis with rationality itself makes it easy for Castaneda to discredit rationality as further considerations appear to invalidate the explanation that has occurred to him.

As with most Occultists, then, the reader has to put up with a certain amount of crudity in specifying the rationality which is supposed to entrap us. What Castaneda is in fact saying (and it is a typical situation in the books) is that he has tried and failed to make sense of his experience in naturalistic terms. It may be that there is a natural explanation, and he has failed to find it. It may also be that he has in fact stumbled upon events which require some kind of "supernatural" explanation. But reason is evidently not to be discredited by any particular consequence of using it, and Castaneda and don Juan are both in fact presenting a rational argument and marshalling evidence as they go along. What is really at stake is what Castaneda calls "my nearly invincible habit of assessing everything ... my processes of book-keeping." For unless such habits are overcome, we shall never experience the *nagual*!

THE NAGUAL? It is pronounced *nah-wa'hl*, and is one component of what turns out to be the central distinction of don Juan's teaching. It must be distinguished from our rational ordering of the world which constitutes the *tonal*, (pronounced *toh-na'hl*) a term which in Yaqui lore apparently describes a guardian spirit. As don Juan explains it, the dilemma of human life is that the guardian, who is broad-minded and understanding, has become a guard, who is narrow and vigilant.

> "The *tonal* is everything we are. . . . Name it! Anything we have a word for is the *tonal*. . . . The *tonal* makes the world only in a manner of speaking. It cannot create or change anything, and yet it makes the world because its function is to judge and assess, and witness . . . the *tonal* makes up the rules by which it apprehends the world. So, in a manner of speaking, it creates the world." (*Tales of Power*, pp. 123–125)

We live in "the island of the *tonal*", and we could not live without it. Nevertheless, it limits us; and we may break out of these limits if we can come to apprehend the *nagual*, a term extended beyond its meaning in Indian lore (the animal into which a sorcerer turns himself) to describe a form of indefinable creative power by which our world is surrounded, and out of which it has been created.

> "The *nagual* is not experience or intuition or consciousness. Those terms and everything else you may care to say are only items on the island of the *tonal*. The *nagual*, on the other hand, is only effect. The *tonal* begins at birth and ends at death, but the *nagual* never ends. . . . One can say that the *nagual* accounts for creativity."

The *tonal* by contrast creates nothing; yet, because it makes up the rules by which it apprehends the world, it can be said to create our world. The point is that the world *is*, in one sense, the way we describe it; and the kind of conflict Castaneda wishes to bring out appears in the following exchange with don Juan (in which, as often, Castaneda's questions are less those of an experienced apprentice than a surrogate for the objections the reader of the book may want to pose):

> "If the *tonal* is everything we know about ourselves, and our world, what then is the *nagual*?"
> "The *nagual* is the part of us which we do not deal with at all."
> "I beg your pardon?"
> "The *nagual* is the part of us for which there is no description—no words, no names, no feelings, no knowledge."
> "That's a contradiction, don Juan. In my opinion if it can't be felt or described or named, it cannot exist."

No doubt it might be objected that "*nagual*" is also a name, and that the world of description cannot be transcended by a description. Don Juan's answer is that the *nagual* can only be experienced; and Castaneda's encounters with it are described in the books he writes.

But we are dealing here with a profoundly unphilosophical view, one which wants to get the biology, zoology, mineralogy, psychology out of the world in order to restore omens, auguries, miracles, spirits, portents and other hints of environing spirit which science and technology have banished as superstitions. This is not to say

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that don Juan's sorcery is irrationalist, for he often tells Castaneda to trust to his senses and his reason. He does so because the *tonal* guards us against the unpredictabilities of the *nagual*, which is so alarming that the unfortunate Castaneda spends most of the active parts of his apprenticeship in a state of gibbering terror, while his teachers are giggling away in the background.

The "impeccable warrior" must approach the *nagual* prepared for death; he must open himself up to it, but the moment he begins to experience it, he must moderate the experience by invoking the *tonal*. The sudden movements through space or the suspensions of gravity which are the simple openings to the *nagual* vouchsafed to Castaneda are not adventures to be embarked on light-heartedly. Indeed, it is hardly a voluntary adventure at all, for although Castaneda's Occultism has no theology, it does incorporate a notion called "power" which guides the actions of both sorcerer and apprentice and might be construed as a determining providence. Such a power also guarantees that no advance in power will happen without a corresponding moral change in those who acquire it.

IT IS, INDEED, a striking feature of Occultism that it is generally quite without interest in moral questions. Occult illumination reveals men as largely sunk in folly from which nothing short of illumination can redeem them:

> ". . . a man who *sees* [don Juan tells Castaneda] controls his folly, while his fellow men can't. A man who *sees* has no longer an active interest in his fellow men. *Seeing* has already detached him from absolutely everything he knew before." (*A Separate Reality*, p. 160)

And in the journey to Ixtlan which becomes the metaphor for the voyage of spiritual discovery, don Genaro finds only "phantom travellers." The unilluminated have become unreal to him.

TALES OF POWER, like the other books of the canon, is a skilfully constructed literary work in a genre that has little respectability at the moment, but which remains of teasing interest to modern human beings, particularly as many of the wilder dreams of technology collapse. Part of its attraction derives from the variety of possible responses a reader may have to it. Calculated ambiguities run right through the Castaneda cycle, and are not dissipated by the heavy-weight doctrine in the last volume. I have been putting the cycle in an Occultist context, but Walter Goldschmidt (who wrote a foreword to *The Teachings of don Juan*) interprets the material in its more explicit anthropological sense:

> "The central importance of entering into worlds other than our own—and hence of anthropology itself—lies in the fact that the experience leads us to understand that our own world is also a cultural construct. By experiencing other worlds, then, we see our own for what it is and are thereby enabled also to see fleetingly what the real world, the one between our own cultural construct and those other worlds, must in fact be like."

There is an obvious objection to this argument. If, in the fullest sense, "our" world *is* a cultural construct, then we are logically incapacitated from having those fleeting moments of freedom. If, on the other hand, such fleeting moments are possible, then our world cannot be entirely a cultural construct. One horn of the dilemma must give way, but most exponents of this type of relativist doctrine want to affirm both horns equally.

This is a difficulty that Castaneda does not have to deal with, for to the extent that his account of the *tonal* and the *nagual* is an explanatory doctrine (rather than a practical belief allowing us to transform our experience) it runs into the different problem of trying to describe what is by definition indescribable. But it is no more troubled by the problem of relativism than is the physicist who has available two totally different descriptions of the chair in which I sit. Hence it seems odd that Goldschmidt should interpret Castaneda in cultural and sociological terms and thus complicate his intellectual viability. Yet the very same thing has been done in a recent discussion of the Castaneda writings. It is called *Reading Castaneda*,[5] and its title indicates homage jointly to Castaneda and Louis Althusser. This imaginative juxtaposition is made all the more striking by the fact that it is intended to introduce undergraduates to the social sciences.

AN ACCOUNT OF AN APPRENTICESHIP to the magical beliefs of a shaman is not exactly the sort of thing one would immediately recognise as a suitable text for such a purpose. But since the lectures from which the book derives were first given in California, we may recognise in it an attempt to capitalise upon an existing situation: the kids were all familiar with Castaneda, so why not capture their interest and lead them forth into wider currents of thought? This is not perhaps a tactic entirely appropriate to university education, where in general the wits of the students must come to meet the thoughts of the teachers; but one may admire the audacity of the attempt. Indeed, although it will be clear that there is much that may be found unsatisfactory about

[5] David Silverman, *Reading Castaneda*. Routledge, £3.75, paper £1.95.

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this sort of book, it may be commended as a discussion which conveys a good deal of the genuine excitement that reading Castaneda may evoke.

Dr Silverman's central thesis is (in Goldschmidt's words) that "our world is a cultural construct", and a large part of the book is concerned with elaborating the way in which Castaneda's scientific questions betray the limiting bias of our own method-obsessed culture. He discusses at length a passage in which Castaneda asks don Juan whether, during a hallucinatory experience, he actually did fly as he seemed to be doing.

Don Juan refuses to answer the question at all. "What do *you* think yourself?" he asks, and remarks "That's all there is in reality—what you felt."

Silverman's view of this passage is that Castaneda's questions typify Western society which can only take seriously what can be publicly validated, and don Juan's answers signify a respect for the dignity of each individual's experience. But Castaneda's questions simply involve a commonplace distinction between dreaming and actuality, and public validation is merely a peripheral matter of how one might make this distinction. Silverman seems to me to be on the right track when he writes (in connection with Castaneda's difficulties in finding what don Juan calls his "spot"):

> "So Castaneda's problem is more than just 'how to do it'—a problem with which we are routinely faced in everyday life and which we routinely resolve by learning and applying *techniques*. His problem as he states it, is that it is by no means certain that he has a problem; yet another person insists that he has."

The word "routine", it soon becomes clear from Silverman's argument, expresses much of what he thinks is wrong with the Western world and it turns up later in a revealing phrase as the "frozen bourgeois reality" we all live in. Yet this situation—in which someone is being persuaded that he has a problem, but in which the terms of the problem are being almost wilfully kept from him—expresses not respect for individual experience but rather the typical technique of the guru with his disciples.

This technique might be seen merely as a device for disturbing the disciple's accustomed view of life in order to increase his receptivity. Dr Silverman thinks there is more to it than that. He considers that don Juan employs such shifts because he is trying to say what is unsayable in our familiar terms. He takes it to be a repudiation of several practices built into Western discourse. One of these is that an event that can be publicly witnessed has a higher status than what is merely seen or felt. Another is the confused distinction between (subjective) experience and (objective) fact.[6] Silverman takes Castaneda as being someone who is in doubt about the status of his experience until he is reassured that it can be "validated" in terms of a physical event that can be publicly witnessed. But Castaneda seems to be in no doubt about what he *experienced*. He merely seeks an additional piece of information—whether his body actually flew through the air—which will make clear the status of what he has experienced. Don Juan's refusal to answer would only begin to bear the weight Silverman puts upon it if he were consistently at sea with the distinction between dream and actuality; but, as he shows in other conversations, this is not the case.

The salutary character Silverman finds in don Juan's refusals depends upon an equivocation I have already noted: between being imprisoned in a culture, and being able to break out of that prison. Silverman explicitly denies that language is a prison; yet he often writes as if it were. When we speak, we cannot help affirming our membership of the community to which we belong. In a typical argument, he affirms the paradox that criticism *is* acceptance, explaining this by remarking that the critic accepts the language in which he criticises. Yet if I criticise an institution (the operation of the House of Commons, for example) I am criticising, not accepting, *that* institution. It is indeed true that any criticism has to take some things for granted. But this commonplace point could be better elucidated in terms of such transparent prose as that of Plato's *Meno* than by the pretentious and overblown pieces of philosophical sociology to which Silverman introduces his readers.

THE REAL SIGNIFICANCE of Castaneda and don Juan within Silverman's book is that they serve as stalking horses by which one sort of valued Western experience, free-floating imaginativeness, is affirmed against what is taken to be a cripplingly dominant sort of experience, namely science and technology.

> "For don Juan, it seems [Silverman writes], the uniqueness of personal experience is precious. ('Each man is different.') To learn a technique by which to recognise 'unimaginable things' is to negate the unique 'seeing' which is every man's expression of himself. For technique (methods, rules as we conceive them) by specifying discreet paths to knowledge, closes off other paths and diverts our attention away from those experiences which, because they seem personally valid for (as) us, seem to transcend technique."

There are things we might cavil at here (as indeed in nearly every paragraph). For example,

[6] I say "confused", of course, because the notion of "subjective" runs together questions of truth and questions of self-reference.

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are rules to be identified with techniques? Many rules, such as those of games, are not technical at all. Nor is it clear what "validity" means when qualifying personal experience rather than arguments. There is, in fact, in Western culture, a very strong tendency to respect individual experience, and in some of its forms Silverman eventually comes to draw upon this very tendency. But, cavils apart (and it is difficult at times, given the manner of exposition, not to drown in them), it is easy to sympathise with some aspects of a position which criticises the absurd rationalism of much of Western life and affirms the value of direct human experience.

Sympathy begins to erode, however, as the argument slides towards melodrama. Dr Silverman is perfectly well aware of the familiar arguments to the effect that no skill can consist purely of rules, for rules cannot specify their own applications. This means that there is an irreducibly personal, non-methodical element in the exercise of any skill. Dr Silverman sees technique as a corset preventing us from exploring large and valuable areas of our experience. Yet the currency of techniques depends upon the fact that they actually open up (rather than close) possibilities which did not previously exist—allow us, indeed, accessibility to "those experiences which . . . seem personally valid for us." In Dr Silverman's view, however, techniques bureaucratise life.

> "Being a 'proper' bureaucrat, just as much as being a 'proper' scientist, means showing one's commitments to the 'facts' and to the correct methods whereby the facts may be assessed. . . . His actions [*i.e.* those of scientists and the bureaucrat] are never allowed to be viewed merely as 'his', but as the actions of an 'official' holding an 'office' and following rules. He is to be seen as simply the instrument of the rule book. His undisputed claim to authority is always: I may not like doing this but I'm only doing my job. . . ."

The puzzled reader may well wonder how "claims to authority" enter the argument at all. Scientists don't "claim authority"; they argue and present evidence. The authority of a bureaucrat derives not from method but from the authority of the constitution under which he works: democratic, monarchical, or whatever it may be. The unmistakably pejorative drift of all this becomes clear, however, when Adolf Eichmann suddenly pops up out of nowhere into the argument. Somehow, reading Castaneda has led Dr Silverman to the view that:

> ". . . to write (act) under the auspices of method (rule) is to find one's community among all those whose activities are the very denial of their humanity, who, like Eichmann, conceal them-selves [*sic*] behind method and rule."[7]

Scientists have had to put up with a lot of loose lay talk about themselves in recent times, but association with Eichmann does seem to be going a little far.

THAT IS PART OF WHAT Dr Silverman makes of Castaneda. But any reader experienced in these particular labyrinths will recognise even before consulting the bibliography that much of this material is Habermas *garni*. This fact may well illustrate Silverman's own contention that it is difficult for us to escape from our own cultural milieu. Indeed, the more Silverman reads Castaneda, the more he seems to be reminded of a bizarre and eccentric selection of views from recent Western writers. There is some delicious nonsense from Roland Barthes in which a conventional Marxist account of early Dutch society is extracted from the aesthetic features of a few Dutch painters. Jean-Paul Sartre is ushered in to affirm: "In actual fact, he [*i.e.* the reader] is not an instantaneous consciousness, a pure timeless affirmation of freedom, nor does he soar above history, he is involved in it." What the undergraduates in California made of passages like this depends, no doubt, upon how many of them were much given to remarking "Man is an instantaneous consciousness, a pure timeless affirmation of freedom" etc., and thus in need of Messrs Sartre and Silverman to announce the error of their ways.

IN THE CONTEXT OF A FLOOD OF MATERIAL of this kind, connected to Castaneda by a thin thread of association, the pedagogic question becomes uppermost. If one is introducing undergraduates to the social sciences, it may be tactically useful to connect one's argument with what already interests them; but it is also necessary to make clear to them the real character of the problems about which people hold differing views. What are they to make of the following passage (quoted from Kochelmans)?

> "All genuinely human thinking is necessarily a thinking on the basis of an historical situation. Any thinking which denies this fact is not genuinely human thinking, or else is thinking which fails to understand itself."

Like many others of the writers Dr Silverman quotes with approval, Joseph Kochelmans has an admirable boldness in declaring what is genuinely human (he would no doubt know what Dr Silverman means by "a denial of humanity").

[7] *Reading Castaneda*, p. 56. The eccentricities of Dr Silverman's prose in this and some other passages derive from the fact that he is pioneering a language in which the insertion of hyphens within words allows them to bear a more reflective meaning than usual.

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It needs to be said, however, that the fact that each thought is a spatio-temporal event does not entail that all thought is "thinking on the basis of an historical situation", whatever that may possibly mean. Mathematical thought, for example, has a history, but is itself historical only in a trivial sense. One's only relevant amusement in the face of so much vacuous dogmatism is to imagine what Galileo, Pascal, or Einstein would say if Kochelmans were trotting around beside them saying "All genuinely human thinking . . ." etc.

But undergraduates are not likely to see the issues clearly; they are likely to pick up these pomposities and imagine that the utterance of them constitutes profundity, without ever quite understanding how anyone ever came to argue in a different manner. R. G. Collingwood records in a well-known passage of his *Autobiography* that, after hearing his philosophy teachers criticise various classic predecessors, he actually went to the library, read the predecessors, and discovered that they had not at all held the doctrines which had been so enthusiastically kicked about on the lecturing rostrum. A Collingwood is in no danger of corruption from picking up such contemptuous expressions as "not genuinely human thinking"; but most undergraduates are not Collingwood.

Silverman has, then, an unfortunate line in quotations from the less luminous passages of modern intellectuality, and these befog the argument he seems to be extracting from Castaneda. That argument is fundamentally one of extreme cultural relativism. "To speak is to locate oneself within a way of knowledge." Hence there can be no "neutral" way of deciding Castaneda's question of whether he actually did fly when he took the Devil's weed. "For not to see men fly with the Devil's weed is simply not to see the Yaqui way."[8] This extreme conclusion is supported, but not justified, by a number of familiar arguments about the element of construction involved in description, and some material about language games drawn from Wittgenstein. Dr Silverman is contemptuous of the whole idea of neutrality, and the word seldom appears in his text without inverted commas (in moments of extreme derogation it is italicised as well).

One of the things we are supposed to get from Castaneda is that "facts and truths only exist in and for communities." *Only* for communities? One cannot but wonder what happens in those communities that deny that bullets kill, that toadstools are poisonous, or that men suffer nasty bumps if they step off high cliffs. We are all morbidly sensitive to committing the intellectual sin of ethnocentricity these days, but it does need to be remembered that this refers only to practices. Science is science, and Yaqui or European makes no odds. How can the "Yaqui way of knowledge" legitimise everything? There are, indeed, occasions when Dr Silverman seems to recognise that his coherence is disappearing with a gurgle down the plughole of a self-contradictory relativism. "Note that I am *not* asserting that the world is how we choose to see it", he remarks on p. 23. But it is p. 93 before a similar caution strikes him again, and he tells us that he does not deny that there is some point in sticking to the facts. But for the most part, in a mood of *épater les étudiants*, he just lets relativism rip.

IT IS, NO DOUBT, this happily imaginative subjectivism which allows Dr Silverman to remark early on that it is of no consequence to his argument *whether don Juan really existed* or was merely a *fiction* of Castaneda's imagination. In fact, this question is crucial, at least to the manner in which Dr Silverman has treated Castaneda. For if there really is such a personage as don Juan, and if he is correctly reporting features of the magic of another culture, then the perceptive and cognitive variations that mark off its assumptions from ours would pose a *genuine* cultural and sociological problem. But if don Juan is merely Castaneda's invention, then the whole cycle of books becomes a reworking of themes familiar in the Occultist tradition and *only* to be understood in those terms. As we have seen, it is part of the ambiguity of Castaneda's writing that he licenses both interpretations at different times. This may be a sign that he has changed his mind (rather as he may also have changed his mind over the question of drugs), or it may be part of the calculated ambiguity of the books which offer much to many possible responses.

IF CASTANEDA'S WORK is, as I have argued, a piece of Occultist doctrine, then Silverman's book reveals not so much the sociological character of Castaneda's Occultism, as the Occultist character of the tradition of relativistic sociology to which he is so extensively indebted.

Both are flirtations with the unsayable, intellectual adventures poised unsteadily on the edge

[8] *Reading Castaneda*, p. 19. This view may seem to be licensed by *The Teachings of don Juan*, but is directly contradicted by the introduction to *Journey to Ixtlan* (p. 8): "So far I have made no attempt whatsoever to place don Juan in a cultural milieu. The fact that he considers himself to be a Yaqui Indian does not mean that his knowledge of sorcery is known to or practised by the Yaqui Indians in general."

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of self-contradiction. To say this, however, is not to discredit them. By contrast with the plying of safer disciplines, relativistic sociology and Occultism are invitations to excess, and frequently topple over into mere absurdity. But they face up to something which, whatever its status in reality, has been of undeniable importance in our culture. The whole question of Occultism is fearfully difficult, and is now being brought to light in a variety of piecemeal ways: in some of the work in the history of ideas on Hegel and Marx, in the investigations of Renaissance Occultism by Frances Yates, perhaps even in recent attempts to exhibit mystical pre-suppositions in Wittgenstein.[9] What stands in the way of bringing such material to light is not "Science," or "Reason", or even our everyday commonplace sense of the reality of things, but a kind of Enlightenment positivism militant. It is not merely that Occultist answers have been relegated to the underworld of superstition, but that the questions posed by the Occultist tradition have become unaskable in any serious way. The slow ferment of ideas, however, seems to be opening them up again.

[9] See also James Webb, *The Flight from Reason*, (1971).

The Sleep of the Great Hypnotist

The sleep of the great hypnotist, who is underground,
Who is hypnotised on his monument with his stone book,
Who on his death-bed gave her a trance and into that openness
Dropped his posthumous suggestion, and died
As she awoke. Now she will never be free of him,
And it is night, and all the water speaks in his voice
Out of the springs under the pine-belts haunted by tawny ghosts
(Great cheated hypnotists, the red owners of the land),
And now he with his spirit command has opened up this land to her,
Her decent campus alive with the indecently dead, her father
Somewhere among them who has told her to dream of him and shed
Spirit tears. The Indian Museum commands her to it
Where there are nose-bones, and painted sticks for the hair,
Effigy-pipes that are portable altars with a spirit to consult
That blows gentle blue whirlwinds from his carved-open head,
And there are skulls stained green from brass kettles in the soil,
And there are reindeer combs for causing dreams,
Cootie-combs to comb dreams into your hair before you sleep,
Gesumaria combs to comb fine orgasms into your hair;
And the dead Hypnotist's command unlocks this case with her hand
And visions of running horses pass through her head
As his orders pass the comb through her mane. . . .

Among all these Indians and knowledge where is her father,
Where, in this newly-alive world full of the dead?
A woman whose oily plaits shine in the starlight smiles at her:
"He is not born yet", and pats her global tummy;

So she dreams of the great hypnotist among the Indian relics
By post-hypnosis after his death, and in the graveyard
The dead man tries to turn over one more page in his cold stone book.

Over the dark snow, somebody throws a great window-spark open

His last experiment wishes she were that squaw.

Peter Redgrove

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Sinyavsky's Voice

By Max Hayward

For spring, my child, you'll wait—
You'll find it lies.
You'll call out for the sun to rise—
It will not rise.
When you begin to cry, your cries
will sink like lead. . . .

Then be content with life today,
Stiller than water, lower than grass.
Oh children, if you only knew
The cold and gloom of days ahead!
ALEXANDER BLOK
"A Voice from the Chorus" (February 1914)

FEW WRITERS, in this or any other age, can have had such a bizarre literary career as Andrey Sinyavsky, otherwise known as Abram Tertz, the author of *A Voice from the Chorus*. A decade has now gone by since the trial in Moscow at which he and his fellow-defendant, Yuli Daniel (Nikolai Arzhak) attracted world-wide attention; it may, therefore, be helpful to give here some account of the events, and of the background to them.

Until his arrest in the autumn of 1965, Andrey Donatovich Sinyavsky was known only as a teacher and writer who, though still young, had already established a modest reputation in Moscow literary and academic circles. As a member of the Gorky Institute of World Literature (a dependency of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union) he had published a number of scholarly essays and studies on modern Russian writers and poets—contributing, for instance, signed chapters on Maxim Gorky and Edward Bagritsky to a three-volume history of Soviet Russian Literature published by the Academy in 1958. The range and depth of his learning was demonstrated in *The Poetry of the Revolutionary Era* (1964; written together with A. Menshutin), the first work in the field after Stalin's death to revive many forgotten or suppressed names of the early years of the new epoch. Even more significant was Sinyavsky's lengthy introduction to a selection of Pasternak's poetry that came out in 1965—it was passed by the censors for publication only three months or so before Sinyavsky and Daniel were arrested. Nothing better has ever been written on the nature and sense of Pasternak's work: it is illuminating in the precise meaning of the word. The achievement was all the more impressive in that Sinyavsky was unable to even mention let alone discuss, many of the poems included in *Doctor Zhivago*, particularly the religious ones, which—together with the novel itself—are still under a ban in the Soviet Union. Although the mere fact of the publication of this new and somewhat fuller selection marked a further stage in the gingerly process of "rehabilitation" that had seen going on since his death in 1960, Pasternak's unprecedented act of defiance in having deliberately published *Doctor Zhivago* abroad, and the consequent award of the Nobel prize to him in 1957, had still not been forgotten or forgiven by the Soviet authorities, least of all by the rancorous, backward-looking literary "establishment" associated with them. Sinyavsky had already given public proof of his allegiance to Pasternak at a time when it was decidedly even less healthy to do so. At Pasternak's funeral in May 1960, which was attended by many members of Moscow's liberal intelligentsia—despite the best efforts of the authorities to head them off—he and Yuli Daniel had played a conspicuous part as pallbearers—there is a photograph which shows them leaving Pasternak's house with the coffin. The policemen later involved in the investigation of their "crime" must have been struck at how the pair thus boldly associated themselves, at his death, with the great poet who had shown them the way. In the light of the revelations to come, it was indeed a breathtaking gesture.

SIDE BY SIDE WITH his scholarly publications Sinyavsky wrote articles and reviews for a much wider audience in *Novy Mir*, the monthly literary journal which under the editorship of Alexander Tvardovsky became the chief forum and rallying point for the liberal intelligentsia during the Khrushchev years. Sinyavsky made his first appearance in *Novy Mir* in 1962 with a strongly critical review of an unrepresentative and biased volume of Pasternak's verse (some of it actually

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tampered with!) that had come out a couple of years after the poet's death and could only be seen as a preliminary step, now that he was out of harm's way, in a familiar process of falsely making him out to have been, despite everything, a loyal son of the age. This attempt to protect Pasternak's memory from a posthumous affront naturally did nothing to endear Sinyavsky to the more retrograde section of the literary community —which in those years, thanks in part to Khrushchev's erratic policies, was somewhat on the defensive. Even worse from this point of view were other subsequent articles in *Novy Mir* where Sinyavsky wrote with a gentle but none the less devastating irony about some of the shoddy literary products of several "conservative" or neo-Stalinist writers. In other articles written at this time Sinyavsky left no doubt where his sympathies lay by his very choice of subject: Anna Akhmatova, Isaac Babel and other such authentic representatives of Russian literature who had been silenced or persecuted, and could be partially restored to their rightful place only in the post-Stalin years.

IN THE FIRST HALF of the 1960s—indeed until the time when Sinyavsky's and Daniel's arrest and trial precipitated an abrupt change in the climate—there was nothing very unusual in such a display of liberal sentiment. The process set off by Stalin's death and the revelations about him at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956 had affected most intellectuals of Sinyavsky's generation in much the same way: disillusionment, not to say disaffection, was all but universal. In this respect Sinyavsky could scarcely be said in those years to have stood out particularly among the many other young scholars and writers who hastened to express themselves in cautiously worded (and often heavily censored) articles written for learned periodicals, for *Novy Mir*, and for certain other journals where liberal influence predominated. But in Sinyavsky's case there were some special features.

First of all, there was the circumstance—later to prove fateful—that in 1947, as a student at Moscow University, he had become acquainted with Hélène Pelletier, the daughter of an attaché at the French embassy who by way of a diplomatic courtesy had been given permission to attend courses in Russian literature. In the late Stalin years, when truly fantastic measures were taken to isolate the Soviet population from corrupting outside influences, and when the few Westerners resident in Moscow as diplomats or newspapermen were treated as pariahs (even though materially privileged ones), this was a very rare concession, granted to only one or two other foreigners. It would certainly have been unthinkable a year or so later, when the last of the token goodwill generated by the wartime alliance had vanished. In her account of her meetings with Sinyavsky in those days,[1] Hélène Pelletier (later, by marriage, Zamoyska) recalls that he seemed to share the basic articles of faith to be expected at that time in one of his age and background:

> "The son of an active revolutionary, he shared his family's cult of the Revolution . . . he belonged to the Communist League of Youth (Komsomol) and was, needless to say, an atheist."

Although curious about the outside world and relatively open-minded, he was not impressed (nor is he still!) by any claims on behalf of Western humanism and its institutions. He believed in a kind of ideal Communism (whose remoteness from Stalinist practice, however, was certainly dawning on him already then), and felt that Christianity had nothing to offer:

> "Christianity has been going downhill ever since the Renaissance, ever since it made personal salvation the only thing that mattered. Modern Christianity is individualist; Communism is concerned with the good of mankind, so its moral meaning is higher. . . ."

With all this, he was already delving into virtually forbidden areas of the Soviet past, particularly the literature of the 1920s, which would inevitably raise fundamental doubts in his mind. But as in the case of many younger Russian intellectuals, it was a sudden personal confrontation with an act of arbitrary injustice that first really jolted him. In 1951 his father—whom he several times fondly recalls in *A Voice from the Chorus*—was arrested on a trumped-up charge; though released after the end of the Stalin terror in 1953, he died shortly afterwards.

KHRUSHCHEV'S "SECRET SPEECH" on Stalin at the Twentieth Congress demolished the very foundations of the beliefs on which Sinyavsky and his contemporaries had been reared. Many of them, however, had become emotionally and intellectually dependent on faith in an all-embracing system of values of the kind that Communism claimed to be. The only alternative to despair or cynicism was to set about immediately on the search for a substitute. But what? And where to begin looking? The collapse of the old had been as total as its continuing pretension to undivided predominance; only a small minority felt able to try and salvage something from the débris—it was easier to return to "pure" Marxism in the West,

[1] "Sinyavsky, the Man and the Writer", by Hélène Zamoyska in *On Trial. The Case of Sinyavsky (Tertz) and Daniel (Arzhak)*, edited by Leopold Labedz and Max Hayward (London, 1967).

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far away from the inescapable evidence of what an impure form had wrought in practice. There was no question at that moment of fruitful contacts with the external world. Russia was still effectively sealed off and the "half-men"—as Osip Mandelstam once called them—who inherited Stalin's power were determined to keep it so. Any hope of spiritual renewal could only come from an internal source, from somewhere close at hand.

IT MAY SEEM BARELY CREDIBLE, but it is a literal fact that in the period after Stalin's death—and as a consequence of his vast depredations—there was only a single figure alive in the whole of the Soviet Union who enjoyed any wide measure of genuine authority and to whom at least some section of the educated or thinking community could look for guidance in their sudden perplexity, and who could serve, if only in silence, as a moral exemplar—and hence as a potential source of alternative values. This solitary figure was Pasternak.

The reason for Pasternak's lonely eminence was that he was the only indisputably great poet of his generation who had lived through and survived the whole of the Soviet era on his own terms. He had made no concessions of principle, and had never yielded to the blandishments, intimidation or direct coercion that had led almost everybody else to various degrees of compromise—of which the least was to lie low in the usually vain hope of being spared. But Pasternak made no effort to bargain for his life, even on these minimal conditions. Already during the War, as he confided to friends, he had determined to speak out if the Stalin régime continued unchanged after victory over the Germans. It was at this time that *Doctor Zhivago* was at least partly conceived as something which would place his own age in the perspective of the whole Christian era, and beyond that, of eternity. In this light the Soviet epoch, with its Great Leader ruling over the anonymous masses, was seen in effect as a reversion to Imperial Rome where

> "you had blood and beastliness and cruelty, and *pockmarked* Caligulas untouched by the suspicion that any man who enslaves others is inevitably second-rate. . . ."

IN THE LATE 1940s, at the height of the post-War terror, Pasternak gave draft chapters of the novel to friends and acquaintances—an act of unimaginable courage, not to say foolhardiness, in those years. When copies inevitably found their way into the hands of the secret police, Pasternak was subjected to unspeakable tribulations, the full story of which is still to be told. It was a strange, largely silent duel between the "pockmarked Caligula" and the poet—who even perpetrated unheard-of acts of public defiance. On one occasion in 1948, for instance, at a poetry reading in Moscow's largest auditorium (to which he had only been invited in the expectation or on the understanding that he would demonstrate his "loyalty"), he explicitly dissociated himself from the other poets present and the propaganda topic ("Down with the Warmongers!") to which they were all supposed to address themselves according to the advertised programme. It was this—his last public appearance in the Stalin years—that showed the packed audience of Moscow intellectuals in the hall that he had not surrendered. If Stalin's hand was stayed in this unique instance it was partly because he undoubtedly planned a sweeter revenge than mere physical removal of the rebellious poet would have afforded, calculating that by a combination of unbearable pressures he could still force him to sing his praises in verse—as he had forced Akhmatova to, by using her son as a hostage.

WHEN HÉLÈNE ZAMOYSKA returned to Russia after Stalin's death and renewed her contact with Sinyavsky, she learned that, like other leading Russian dissidents of the future, he had found his way to Pasternak's house in the writer's colony at Peredelkino near Moscow. He read *Doctor Zhivago* in manuscript and was particularly struck by the religious poems, though at that time he did not agree with all of Pasternak's ideas. As Zamoyska writes, Sinyavsky "was even more impressed by him as a person than as a writer. . . ." This was not surprising, for if freedom from convention and affectation is unusual in the West, it was more rare in the Soviet Union so soon after Stalin's death. There was no prudence in Pasternak, not the slightest attempt at evasion or concession to political expediency and conventional jargon. The fear of what others might think, the distrust, the terror fostered by Stalinism seemed to have passed him by, leaving him as full as ever of enjoyment of life and of confidence in his fellowmen. Pasternak's courage in sending his manuscript abroad, his deep conviction that he had a perfect right to do so, as well as a positive duty to "bear witness to his time"—none of this did anything but enhance his reputation and stimulate others to follow his example. Certainly Sinyavsky was influenced by the example of a man he admired as "a great patriot and a great poet."

Thus inspired by the way Pasternak had acted in defiance of all the taboos, Sinyavsky now asked Zamoyska to arrange for the appearance of his own work abroad. Not being protected by the fame that Pasternak enjoyed both in Russia and

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the outside world, Sinyavsky knew of course that his attempt to publish free of censorship would immediately be cut short if he did so under his own name. He therefore chose the pen-name "Abram Tertz", the hero of an underworld ballad in the tradition of the romantic Jewish freebooters of the Moldavanka, the thieves' quarter of Odessa immortalised in the early stories of Isaac Babel. Ballads like the one about Abram Tertz became popular in Moscow after Stalin's death, partly, perhaps, because the criminal underworld had achieved a certain autonomy unique in Soviet society, and also because of the extraordinary fact that under Stalin there was honour *only* among thieves: their peculiar "law" emphasised loyalty to each other as the supreme virtue. As Sinyavsky shows in his account of them in *A Voice from the Chorus*, they constituted a kind of order of chivalry which contrasted very favourably in some respects with the rest of society. The choice of this pseudonym was also appropriate, needless to say, in its implied allusion to the way in which the untrammelled exercise of the writer's craft is regarded in official Soviet circles.

THE FIRST "ABRAM TERTZ" MANUSCRIPT, an essay entitled "On Socialist Realism", was printed in the French literary journal *Esprit* in February 1959, and was followed shortly afterwards, in 1960, by a short novel, *The Trial Begins*, published in the original Russian in the Paris émigré Polish journal *Kultura* (and a little later in the English translation in ENCOUNTER (January 1960)).[2] A collection of five stories under the general title *Fantastic Tales (The Icicle and Other Stories* in English translation) came out in Paris the next year and was soon translated into the major Western languages. Another short novel, *Lyubimov*, appeared in 1964 (*The Makepeace Experiment* in English translation, 1965). *Unguarded Thoughts*, a small book of notes and reflections—a kind of inner monologue almost in diary form—was published in America a few months before the arrest of the author, and a final story, "Pkhentz", in ENCOUNTER, in April 1966, a month after his trial.

The stylistic accomplishment of Sinyavsky's writings, and the unusual literary culture patently lying behind them led one or two Western specialists in Russian literature to surmise that "Abram Tertz" must surely be an émigré pretending to write from inside the country. In its very few references to the matter before the truth came out, the Soviet press did what it could to foster this view of the shadowy Tertz as a "White émigré bandit of the pen", and it seems possible that the Soviet authorities may actually have believed this themselves for a time. It did indeed seem well nigh incredible not only that any living Soviet author should possess this degree of literary sophistication, but that—even more unaccountably—he should also have the ingenuity to evade detection for so long (nearly five years by the end of his clandestine career) in a country where police informers are as numerous and inconspicuously ever-present as sparrows.

In "On Socialist Realism", after showing up official literary doctrine for the poor, hollow thing it is, Tertz-Sinyavsky concluded that "realism" of any stripe, whether genuine or pretended, was inadequate as a means of representing the improbable present, and he invoked E. T. A. Hoffmann, Dostoevsky, Goya and Chagall as necessary teachers in the creation of a "phantasmagoric art" to replace it. What he meant is illustrated by some of the stories he composed during the following years in the precarious secrecy of his Moscow apartment, ever mindful of the Draconian penalties he would incur if found out.

In the *Fantastic Tales* the familiar surface of everyday life is often suddenly shattered and then reassembled in the manner of surrealist painting. In one of them, "The Icicle", for example, the tramcars racing along a Moscow street are transformed by the fantasy of a bystander into mammoths charging through a prehistoric canyon. Time and place are no longer stable categories to be taken for granted: in *The Makepeace Experiment* a small Russian provincial town suddenly slips into a different dimension and becomes the scene of occult happenings. Sinyavsky's "phantasmagorias" are disciplined, tightly constructed narratives which never descend to mere whimsicality and are always geared to the serious purpose of conveying, by unexpected "dislocations" and shifts of focus, the otherwise unimaginable quality of life in the Soviet era, at the same time commenting, with a profundity lightly disguised by humour, on its ideological assumptions. The only modern Russian writing to compare in this use of comic inventiveness as a means of bringing home the deadly earnest, is that of Mikhail Bulgakov whose *The Master and Margarita* (published in Moscow in 1967, twenty-seven years after the author's death) also depicts Soviet "reality" as something surely conjured up

[2] ENCOUNTER has published the following stories and articles by—and on—Andrey Sinyavsky. Abram Tertz: "The Trial Begins" (January 1960), "The Icicle: A Winter's Tale" (February 1962), "Phkentz" (April 1966). Andrey Sinyavsky: "On Boris Pasternak" (April 1966), "On Evtushenko" (April 1967), "A Controversial Exchange with Günter Grass" (December 1974). Leopold Labedz and Max Hayward, "Writers and the Police" (January 1966). Leopold Labedz, "The Trial in Moscow" (April 1966). Hélène Zamoyska, "Andrey Sinyavsky Arrives in Paris" (November 1973).

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by a magician with the power and genius of Satan himself.

This is as much as to say that Sinyavsky belongs in the Gogolian tradition of Russian literature—a debt of affinity handsomely acknowledged by him in a brilliant study of Gogol written in the forced-labour camp and recently published in London. As in Gogol's tales of the Ukraine and St Petersburg, nightmare constantly obtrudes. In Sinyavsky's stories, however, it takes the form not of the phantom emanations of the subconscious (these, like other Gogolian devices, are sometimes wittily parodied—the strange bird, for example, in *The Makepeace Experiment*), but of the hallucinatory mental disorders endemic in a populace ruled for decades by fear and mutual distrust. There can be no more telling study in modern literature of what by understatement must be called paranoia than "You and I", one of the *Fantastic Tales*. The special conditions that made such obsessive terrors so all-pervasive are given the sharp immediacy of a bad dream in *The Trial Begins*, where the leaden oppressiveness of Stalin's last years receives its literary deserts in a fashion unlikely ever to be rivalled—unless, as may be hoped, by Abram Tertz himself in his new incarnation. Perhaps the most affecting of the stories is "Pkhentz", the last of them. To some extent inspired by the author's own situation, it is about a being from another planet, the sole survivor of a spaceship that had crash-landed on Earth some years previously in the wilds of Siberia, who now lives in a Moscow communal apartment—that is, sharing a kitchen and bathroom with other tenants. Since his biology and metabolism are non-human, this involves elaborate disguise and constant vigilance, and hope is sustained only by the dream of one day meeting another creature similar to himself, or of an eventual return to the nostalgically remembered culture from which he has been separated with such finality.

Unguarded Thoughts is in a very different vein from the stories—so much so that it was at first believed by some people to have surely come from another pen than "Abram Tertz's." In form—and to a lesser extent in substance—it is the precursor of *A Voice from the Chorus*, consisting of the author's ideas and musings on a variety of topics, and written down just as they came to him; the mode of expression thus tends to the aphoristic, and the book has no preconceived structure except the loose one imposed by the recurrence of certain dominant themes. If *The Trial Begins* and *Fantastic Tales* often show preoccupation with the consequences of loss of faith in Soviet Marxism as a debased product of Western humanism (itself transplanted to Russia, it should always be borne in mind, in a predigested form, and in such an imperious way as to provoke enduring social, cultural and psychological distress), *Unguarded Thoughts* is largely the record of how Sinyavsky came to find himself under the spell of the God so rudely ousted in the few years before he was born to make way for the new idols which he and his generation were brought up to worship.

PERHAPS THE KEY to his new sense of the world (it is a sense rather than a view) is to be found in the following passage:

> "I never know what liberal philosophers mean by the 'freedom of choice' they are always talking about. Do we really choose whom to love, what to believe in, what illness to suffer? Love (like any other strong feeling) is a monarch, a despot, who dominates us from within, capturing us to the last remnant and forbidding us to glance back. How can we think of freedom when we are *swallowed whole*, when we see nothing, are aware of nothing except the One who chose us and, having chosen, torments us or bestows favours on us? The moment we wish to free ourselves (whether from sin or from God), we are already swayed by a new ruler who whispers about liberation only until the day we have totally surrendered to him."

The words about being "swallowed whole" are perhaps especially significant: they suggest that Sinyavsky's theology is intimately related to his artistic perception of things, indeed his aesthetics are already summed up in "On Socialist Realism", where he wrote of the rapture we may feel at "the metamorphoses of God taking place before our eyes, at the giant peristalsis of His viscera, at the convolutions of His brain."

SINYAVSKY'S DUAL EXISTENCE came to an end in September 1965 when he was arrested by the KGB—they had evidently picked up the scent because of an indiscretion in the West and were soon able through a little detective work, aided by the installation of listening devices which monitored conversations in Sinyavsky's apartment, to gather all the evidence they needed. At the same time they arrested Yuli Daniel, whose manuscripts had also been smuggled out of the country by the same channels. For several months the two were held in almost solitary confinement, seeing no one except their interrogators, stool pigeons put in the same cells with them, and material witnesses occasionally brought in for a "confrontation."

In these post-Stalin times, no physical brutality was used, but the usual array of sometimes even more effective torments was deployed in full—playing on the prisoner's anxiety about his family, hints at supposed betrayal by friends, and so forth. Each of them could have made things easier for himself—and received a shorter sentence when the case came to trial—by admitting that what

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he had done was "wrong", and by indicating willingness to express public repentance. But neither yielded. The three-day trial which eventually took place in February 1966 was unique in Russian history. Neither under the Tsars, nor even under Stalin had there ever been proceedings in which the main *corpus delicti* consisted of the actual contents of works of imaginative literature. The trial was hopelessly prejudiced by vituperative and grossly misleading articles in the press, and reports from the courtroom (to which access was severely restricted) were meagre and flagrantly biased.[3] The verdicts—seven years for Sinyavsky and five for Daniel—provoked a storm of protest in the outside world which, for a case of this kind, was unprecedented in its intensity and in the degree of unanimity between Communists and non-Communists alike. The result of the trial also gave rise to the first widespread and organised protests in Russia itself: this was the beginning of large-scale dissidence and *samizdat*. But it did not help. Sinyavsky and Daniel were sent off to forced-labour camps, and both served their sentences almost to the end.

THE AREA TO WHICH they were sent is about 300 miles due east of Moscow, near a small town called Potma, at a junction of the main railway line from Moscow to Kuibyshev. On both sides of a branch line (not marked on the maps) running off north from Potma for about thirty miles are the numerous camps and other installations of the extensive "corrective labour colony" —to use the official term—which is still called by the code-name *Dubrovlag* ("oak-forest camp") assigned to it in 1947, the year when Stalin personally ordered the establishment of "special camps" with bucolic and geographically anonymous designations such as *Ozerlag* ("lake camp") and *Rechlag* ("river camp"). All "political" prisoners were to be concentrated in these camps with a view to their speedy liquidation in the event of a new war. After the winding-down in the post-Stalin years of many of the much larger and remoter camp complexes of Gulag in the far North and East, Dubrovlag remained as one of the major camp areas for all categories of prisoners, including "political" ones.[4] It has certain advantages. It is conveniently situated for the "feeding" of convicted prisoners from the big Moscow jails (where people are held only during their interrogation and trial). It is an old-established, practised mechanism with about fifteen camps of the familiar kind: barracks surrounded by compounds with searchlights, watchtowers and "forbidden zones" round the perimeter—all administered by experienced personnel and located in a region where the population has long been schooled in mistrust towards the occasional escapee. Last but not least, Dubrovlag has an industry in which the prisoners can be productively employed: a furniture factory, served by its own sawmill, foundry, etc. (The exploitation of prison labour in the economy thus continues, though it is now a question of consumer goods rather than of such primary industries as mining and lumbering. The railway brings fuel and other materials—together with prisoners—to the stations along the Potma branch line; and back to Moscow go the products of the factory, such as cabinets for television sets, to be sold in the shops of Moscow at a profit to the state, even after it has covered the upkeep of the camps and paid a pittance to the prisoners from which they can supplement their meagre rations by purchasing extras in the camp store.)

Sinyavsky and Daniel—kept apart from each other in different camps because they had been "accomplices"—were put to work at the various kinds of manual jobs mentioned in *A Voice from the Chorus*. Estimates of how many prisoners there were in Dubrovlag in the 1960s vary, but the lowest puts the total at about 15,000. The majority were common criminals and persons convicted of "white-collar" offences, but there were also many prisoners sentenced for alleged "anti-Soviet" activities, including "nationalists" from non-Russian minorities (such as Ukrainians—a large and growing category), and members of religious sects—including one thought to be extinct until Sinyavsky encountered representatives of it among his fellow prisoners. Although common criminals no longer virtually run the camps, as they did at times in the Stalin years, the "politicals" are by no means segregated from the others, so that a Jewish intellectual, for example, may well find himself rubbing shoulders with anti-Semitic Russians who were sentenced many years ago for collaborating with the Nazis during the War. As we see from his book, Sinyavsky came to know a very motley range of humanity, and the contact is reflected in numerous ways—though he attempts no systematic account of his fellow-inmates, nor indeed of any other aspect of the camp and his life there.[5]

[3] A proper record was made by Sinyavsky's wife and several friends who afterwards collated their notes —no one person was allowed to attend all the sessions of the court. The transcript was smuggled out to the West and may be found in English translation in *On Trial*.

[4] There are still many other camps throughout the country and those of Dubrovlag are simply the ones about which most is known. As in the past, there is no official information about the scope of the Soviet penal system.

[5] Important descriptions of Dubrovlag written by prisoners who were there in the middle sixties are: Anatoly Marchenko's *My Testimony* (London, 1969), and Mykhaylo Osadchy's *Cataract* (New York, 1976).

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AS ALREADY INDICATED, *A Voice from the Chorus* is not a descriptive narrative in the ordinary sense and is based almost entirely on the lengthy letters written home to the author's wife Maria twice a month—all that was allowed under the regulations. The contents of all letters were examined by the camp authorities, and any detail or comment thought to be too outspoken could result in a letter not being passed, and in the writer being put in the punishment cells into the bargain. This is, therefore, not just another book about the camps, written after the prisoner's release, but a record of the author's own inner preoccupations as he actually noted them down during his long sojourn in the "house of the dead."

The title is borrowed from the poem by Alexander Blok quoted at the beginning of this article. Written not long before the outbreak of the First World War, these are some of Blok's most cheerless lines, full of characteristic foreboding of the horrors to come—"the cold and gloom of days ahead." Blok put "A Voice from the Chorus" as the first item in an anthology of his work which he published the year before his death[6]—when he had already understood that his own cries would indeed "sink like lead", and that his poet's voice would be drowned out by the rising din of the post-Revolutionary "chorus." As a child of the Revolution and a Russian intellectual Sinyavsky was fated to endure in actual fact what Blok and some of his contemporaries had only foreseen and summoned forth in apocalyptic premonitions, not, for the most part, living to see them come to pass in full. In choosing his title, Sinyavsky may also have had in mind the reference to a similar poem of Blok's by a surviving friend of Yuri Zhivago in the epilogue to Pasternak's novel:

> "A thing which has been conceived in lofty, ideal manner becomes coarse and material. Thus Rome came out of Greece, and the Russian revolution came out of the Russian enlightenment. Take that line of Blok's: *'We, the children of Russia's terrible years'*—you can see the difference of period at once. In his time, when he said it, he meant it figuratively, metaphorically . . . now the figurative has become literal, the children are children, and the terrors are terrible. . . ."

The "chorus" which Sinyavsky himself supplies at certain points in his book as a background to his own voice is picked out of the general hubbub around him in the bleak, over-crowded barracks, the camp compound, or the factory to which the prisoners were taken out under escort for the daily grind of "corrective" labour. The "chorus" serves at most times as a confused demotic counterpoint to the author's silent thoughts on art, literature, the human condition, and many other topics. Since most of the "chorus" sentences are devoid of specific context, representing isolated snatches of talk which invaded the author's ears from the surrounding Babel, their individual import is frequently left to the imagination—though it can generally be inferred from its connection with neighbouring phrases, or from the reflections sometimes set in train by them. The meaning of what the "chorus" says is, however, of less concern than its tone or flavour. In vocabulary and phonetic colouring, it vividly echoes the submerged vernacular of the Russian "lower depths" into which the author was cast. It is a speech abounding in malapropisms, non-sequiturs, grotesquely garbled forms, pathetically inadequate attempts at "educated" parlance, slang words from the criminal underworld, camp jargon, etc. To a Russian ear (and, alas, in all the nuances *only* to a Russian ear) this verbal flotsam and jetsam evokes—not with condescension, always with compassion and wonderment—a whole world in which language mirrors a desolation of the spirit such as is everywhere closer, perhaps, to the essence of society at large than may be readily avowed.

WITH THE DIFFERENCE, THEN, that his voice is no longer unaccompanied, Sinyavsky now continues in much the same manner as in *Unguarded Thoughts*. But we see a distinct shift of emphasis in the burden of his meditations. There the main themes were God and Christianity. By the time he arrived in Dubrovlag, this matter had been settled. As a believing Russian Orthodox Christian, he could now pass on to other subjects, secure in a faith which embraced all else (including art, the other redeeming link that besides his religion means most to him) and made him in the core of his being invulnerable to the ordeal ahead. As he had written before his arrest, in *Unguarded Thoughts:*

> "Truly Christian feelings are against human nature, they are abnormal, paradoxical. You are beaten, and you rejoice. Misfortunes shower on you, and you are happy. Instead of running away from death, you are attracted to it and assume its likeness in advance. To any normal, healthy person it seems mad . . . but here everything is in reverse—unnatural, say the humanists; supernatural, say the Christians . . . we don't overcome our nature—it is replaced by some other, unfamiliar nature which teaches us how to be ill, suffer and die, and relieves us of the obligation to fear and hate."

The predominant theme in *A Voice from the Chorus*, the theme from which nothing distracts the author for long, is art in all its forms. It was the subject of many of the books he ordered from

[6] I am indebted for this detail, as well as for the translation of the poem, to Sergei Hackel's *The Poet and the Revolution* (Oxford, 1975).

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home (two packages a year under the regulations), or borrowed from fellow-prisoners. Apart from miniature essays on the general nature of art, literature, myths and folklore, we find vignettes devoted to an astonishingly wide range of individual writers, artists, works and styles: Swift and Defoe; Akhmatova; Rembrandt's "Prodigal Son"; Hamlet; Hogarth; Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*; Matisse; Kipling; the Javanese shadow theatre; Mandelstam; the Irish legend of Cuchulainn (inspired by the perusal of a rare work by Alexander Smirnov, the only Russian Celtic scholar); Yoshida Kenko and early Japanese painting; the myths of Oceania; Russian church architecture, and many others which the reader may browse among at will. As the author himself emphasises, his book is not the usual purposeful affair that progresses in one direction to a final destination.There is no lack of topics of a different kind: the code of the Russian criminal underworld, the theory of evolution, the importance of the Holy Ghost for the Russian national character, the reason for the ten years' war over Helen of Troy (what an illumination to come from Dubrovlag!), and—particularly dear to the heart of Abram Tertz—a great deal on magic and fairy-tale transformations, which are assigned no less credibility, and certainly not held in lower esteem, than all the monkey tricks of the prideful technology they anticipated.

THERE IS AN ELEMENT of what can almost be called drama in the contrast between the scholarly, contemplative nature of these notes, and the circumstances in which they were written. But the truth is that Sinyavsky—at one point he says as much—did not really think of himself as being under the constraint normally implied by such circumstances. In a word, he remained beyond the reach of his judges and jailers, and in a vital sense it is perhaps they, rather than he, who were and are in the captive state. During his time in the camp, he managed to write a superbly original essay on Pushkin, now published in Russian in the West.[7] Here he quotes what Pushkin remarked in 1836, about Silvio Pellico's account of his prison life:

> "Silvio Pellico spent ten years in various dungeons and, when he was released, he published his notes. There was general astonishment: people were expecting bitter complaints, but instead they read touching reflections full of serenity, love and benevolence."

The same could be said of Sinyavsky's letters *de profundis*.

[7] *Progulki's Pushkinym* (London, 1975).

Guardi at the ball

Swing from the ceiling — sink in the carpet
Bounce to the hangings — the ordered steps,
The wild surrenders — the sway and the gallop
The perfect repeatings — the moment of calm;

The Duke and his Duchess — the Doge and his Senate
The native the foreign — the clothed and the free
In lace and tiara — in lust and white velvet
In brilliants in laughter — all mortals all warm;

And I in a corner — in black and half-hidden
Cajoling a waiter — for truffles and wine,
Paid two hundred scudi — to snatch them from drowning
Preserve in its costume — the now and the here

To fend off the future — and leave on the canvas
The gold and the crimson — the flush of their flesh,
No tear in the velvet — no word through the laughter
No black in my brush-strokes — no sound in the air.

Laurence Lerner

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Four poems by R. S. Thomas

Saint Paul

Wrong question, Paul. Who am I,
Lord? is what you should have asked.
And the answer, surely, somebody
that it is easy for us to kick against.

There were some matters you were dead right
about. For instance, I like you
on love. But marriage? I would have thought
too many had been burned in that fire
for your contrast to hold.
Still, you are the mountain
the teaching of the carpenter of Nazareth
congealed into. The theologians have
walked round you for centuries and none of
them scaled you. Your letters remain
unanswered, but survive the recipients
of them. And we, pottering among the foot-hills
of their logic, find ourselves staring
across deep crevices at conclusions at which
the living Jesus would not willingly have arrived.

Waiting

Face to face? Ah, no,
God; such language falsifies
the relation. Nor side by side,
nor near you, nor anywhere
in time and space.
Say you were,
when I came, your name
vouching for you, ubiquitous
in its explanations. The
earth bore and they reaped:
God, they said, looking
in your direction. The wind
changed; over the drowned
body it was you
they spat at.
Young
I pronounced you. Older
I still do, but seldomer
now, leaning far out
over an immense depth, letting
your name go and waiting,
somewhere between faith and doubt,
for the echoes of its arrival.

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Shadows

I close my eyes.
The darkness implies your presence,
the shadow of your steep mind
on my world. I shiver in it.
It is not your light that
can blind us; it is the splendour
of your darkness.
And so I listen
instead and hear the language
of silence, the sentence
without an end. Is it I, then,
who am being addressed? A God's words
are for their own sake; we hear
at our peril. Many of us have gone
mad in the mastering
of your medium.
I will open
my eyes on a world where the problems
remain but our doctrines
protect us. The shadow of the bent cross
is warmer than yours. I see how the sinners
of history run in and out
at its dark doors and are not confounded.

Dialectic

They spoke to him in Hebrew and he understood
them; in Latin and Italian and
he understood them. Speech palled
on them and they turned to the silence
of their equations. But God listened to them
as to a spider spinning its web
from its entrails, the mind swinging
to and fro over an abysm
of blankness. They are speaking to me still,
he decided, in the geometry
I delight in, in the figures
that beget more figures. I will answer
them as of old with the infinity
I feed on. If there were words once
they could not understand, I will show
them now space that is bounded
but without end, time that is where
they were or will be; the eternity
that is here for me and for them
there; the truth that with much labour
is born with them and is to be
sloughed off like some afterbirth of the spirit.

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NOTES & TOPICS

Montgomery the Mascot

Virtues & Vices of a Field Marshal—By MICHAEL HOWARD

THE DEATH of Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery of Alamein has been the occasion of commemorations on a scale dwarfing those for any of his colleagues in the Second World War with the exception of Sir Winston Churchill. To a generation which did not know the War the reason may not be immediately clear. Montgomery was only one of the dozen or so senior British commanders of all three services who led the country to victory, and the passing of others no less deserving has received at best only polite attention. Montgomery was by no means a well-loved figure. His successes were due as much to team work on a vast scale as to his personal brilliance as a general, and they were won against adversaries who were greatly outnumbered in material and, usually in men. Did he in fact have any remarkable qualities as a commander except the good luck to be on hand when, for the first time, the British Army was able to fight on equal or better terms with its adversaries—and except a flair for public relations which, in the eyes of his critics, amounted to a craving?

Certainly there is an element of unfairness in this concentration of hero-worship on the figure of Montgomery. There were indeed other military leaders to whom the nation owed at least as much if not a great deal more. But generals are in a special position. Their colleagues in the Navy and in the Air Force are inevitably more remote figures. With the passing of the great naval battle, with command of the sea being contested by innumerable minor actions and depending as much on scientific expertise as on seamanship, even the most formidable of Admirals—even a Ramsay or a Cunningham—becomes an administrator exercising remote control. If one had to select a single man on whom the survival of the country depended in the darkest days of the War, one could do worse than to choose Admiral Sir Max Horton, who as Commander-in-Chief Western Approaches bore the brunt of the submarine attack at its height; but who outside the Navy (or now, indeed, inside) has ever heard of him? Within the Royal Air Force some particularly impressive Air Marshal—a Harris, a Slessor, a Cochrane—might stamp his personality on his own Command, but they did not become national figures. The Chiefs of Staff, those organisers of victory, never emerged from the shadows of Whitehall. But even in the Second World War generals still commanded armies and won or lost battles in the old style. Whether they won or lost them might ultimately depend on the success with which the Navy kept the sea lanes open, the Air Force swept its opponents from the skies and destroyed enemy material and communications, and the Army itself had been provided with adequate equipment. An infinity of causes contributed to the result. But over the results there presided for better or worse a single man. However much the cards may have been stacked in his favour he could still lose his nerve and bungle the job. On the other hand, however inadequate his resources, his skill could still gain moderate successes or mitigate defeat. It was into his hands ultimately that the nation entrusted its resources and waited breathlessly on the result. With whatever advantages he might have begun, he still had to earn his success the hard way.

AND MONTGOMERY DID HAVE enormous advantages; advantages which his predecessors, starved as they were of material, might well envy. The British Army was the Cinderella of the three services in the years before the War; it was a small force whose role was basically to police the Empire. Nobody contemplated the possibility that it would ever expand again as it had in the First World War. Not until 1939 was it allowed to equip itself to fight on a continental scale at all; and it is not to be wondered at that when it did

FIELD MARSHAL BERNARD LAW MONTGOMERY *died on 24 March 1976 at the age of 88.*

MICHAEL HOWARD *is Chichele Professor elect of the History of War, University of Oxford.*

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expand it did so clumsily and erratically, selecting both its equipment and its commanders by a process of grievous trial and error. In each encounter with the Germans during this period of growth it was decisively beaten—in Norway, in France, in Greece, and in Cyrenaica. Its procurement policy was bad (both in tanks and anti-tank guns it was continually outclassed); its staff work was ponderous; its commanders proved all too often to be good regimental soldiers promoted far above their ceilings; its tactical doctrine was a hand-to-mouth affair; and above all the cooperation it received from the Air Force suffered from the continuing reluctance of that Service to dedicate itself to the close support of the land battle which the Luftwaffe provided for the German Army with such spectacular results. It was a tragic time in which much fine material was wasted, and reputations were ruined for lack of adequate instruments to deploy.

By 1942 this grim and prolonged prelude was coming to an end. This was the year which had always been foreseen in British rearmament programmes when arms production would reach its full potential, and now American supply was beginning to supplement British as well. In the Western Desert the Matildas and Valentines of the first generation of British armour were replaced by Grants, and, even better, Shermans from the United States—a few vital months before the Germans deployed the improved Mark IVs which could counter them. The two-pounder anti-tank gun, a kind of souped-up pea-shooter, was giving way to the excellent six-pounders, which in their turn released field-artillery from the anti-tank role it had been compelled to adopt in favour of more offensive missions. In the hands of Air Chief Marshal Tedder—a man to whom Britain owes no less than it does to Montgomery—the Royal Air Force in the Eastern Mediterranean was transformed into an instrument of unique flexibility, combing the seas for enemy supply ships but on call for immediate support to front-line infantry. The British and Commonwealth Forces who had been fighting for two continuous years in the Western Desert, outclassed in equipment, outmanoeuvred, outgeneralled, knew what had to be done if only they had the tools to do it with. By the autumn of 1942 they had them, in overwhelming quantity: over 1,000 tanks to the enemy's 500, 900 guns, 1400 anti-tank guns, nearly 200,000 men against the enemy's 100,000 (half of them Italian), and complete command of the air.

This superiority they enjoyed partly because by the late summer of 1942 the Middle Eastern Theatre had assumed a moral importance out of all proportion to its strategic significance. This was the only theatre of war in which British troops were fighting the Axis powers. The number of forces engaged was a small fraction of those contending in the gigantic and decisive battles on the Eastern Front. But the ebb and flow of battle across the Western Desert was regarded throughout the world, like the thin thread of mercury in a thermometer, as an indicator of British success in the War as a whole. The performance of the Eighth Army was a factor in the USA's decision on whether to support the European theatre of operations at all, and perhaps also in the perception of a desperately hard-pressed Soviet Union of the seriousness with which her allies intended the defeat of Germany. It was closely watched by those strategically significant neutrals, Spain and Turkey; by Hitler's doubtful satellites, Vichy France and Italy; and by the captive populations of occupied Europe. No other factor was of comparable importance to morale at home: the fall of the tiny port of Tobruk in June 1942 was as shattering a blow to the British nation as the fall of Singapore.

CHURCHILL'S TENDENCY to dramatise and to personify often distorted his judgment, but it did not lead him astray when in August 1942 he paced his room muttering "Rommel—Rommel—Rommel—what matters except beating him?" It was only with the greatest difficulty that he had persuaded the Americans to keep to their strategy of "Europe First" in spite of the British refusal to launch an immediate cross-Channel attack, instead of turning away in disgust to the Pacific. The operation to which the Allies had now set their hand, in North Africa, depended for its success on the friendly neutrality of Spaniards and Frenchmen who had not hitherto been provided with a shred of evidence that Britain and her allies could ultimately master German power. A successful battle in the Western Desert was, thus, the keystone to the arch of Allied strategy, and the general who fought it was assured, overnight, of world-wide fame.

To make assurance doubly sure it was not enough to send to the Middle Eastern Theatre every gun, every tank and every aircraft that could be spared. The commanders had to be relieved of all other responsibilities—especially the responsibility which had so weighed on the mind of General Auchinleck (the Commander-in-Chief of that theatre in 1941–42) of safeguarding their rear against the menace of German forces descending through Persia and Iraq. A separate command was created to deal with that front, leaving the Commander-in Chief Middle East free to concentrate entirely on the Western Desert. A new Commander-in-Chief arrived from England, the imperturbable and self-effacing General Alexander. All that was now needed was

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the Army Commander himself; and with the dearly-loved and battle-experienced General Gott tragically removed from the running when the aircraft was shot down in which he was returning to take up his command, there appeared on this brilliantly lit scene, before the expectant audience, Lieutenant-General Bernard Law Montgomery.

IT IS EASY TO SAY, and many soldiers and writers have since said, that with all these advantages, with the cards stacked in his favour as they had never been for his predecessors, Montgomery could not miss. But not even his bitterest enemies have suggested that he was a mere nonentity created for and by the situation, a kind of pop star built up by the skilful manipulators to meet a national need. He had star quality of his own—that nobody doubted who had had anything to do with him (least of all General Alan Brooke, the C.I.G.S. in whose Corps Montgomery had served as a divisional commander at Dunkirk). It was a quality which had set him apart from his colleagues in the peace-time army: a loneliness bred of an unhappy childhood; a dedication to his profession which he saw, not as "soldiering"—that pleasant, clubbable occupation compounded equally of regimental duties, minor imperial skirmishes and field sports—but as preparation for war and for high command in war; a self-reliance and a self-mastery with which went a total imperviousness to the opinions of others. The alarm felt by those posted to serve under him was equalled only by that of those senior commanders who found him their subordinate. In defiance of any higher authority he serenely went his own way and made sure that all under his command went with him; and "serenely" is the *mot juste*. R. W. Thompson, one of his bitterest critics, has written of his "knack of creating oceans of serenity round himself." Goronwy Rees (who served briefly on his staff) has left an unforgettable picture of the "air of calm and peace" in which he moved—one "almost incongruous in a soldier." Incongruous perhaps, but essential, and the more essential as one rises higher in command. This calm, this tranquillity, this clear-headed self-confidence unshaken by the most ferocious storms of war, is the foundation on which the morale of an entire Army comes to rest. Montgomery possessed it to an almost supernatural degree.

HE WAS KNOWN THEN in the Army: known, admired, feared, not very well liked. He had served with distinction throughout the First World War, taken his profession with untypical seriousness during the inter-War years, commanded a division with outstanding efficiency in the Dunkirk campaign and then, as a Corps commander in England, made himself notorious for the realism of his training, his dedication to physical fitness, the lack of ceremony with which he treated his chairborne staff, whose weekly runs became (depending on whether one was involved in them or not) a subject of amusement or dread. He himself neither drank nor smoked. He was a monastic figure, celibate since the tragic death of his wife, solitary, never at ease with his contemporaries or his seniors, relaxing only in the company of his disciples, of the admiring young. Goronwy Rees described his "narrow foxy face, long-nosed, sharp, intelligent and tenacious, with very bright and clear blue eyes, and a small, light, spare body. The effect was not at all imposing, except for his eyes and an indefinable look on his face of extreme cleverness and sagacity, like a very alert Parson Jack Russell terrier. . . ." This was the little man, utterly self-confident, totally self-contained, who took over the Eighth Army and led it in the most spectacular British victory of the Second World War.

IT WAS IN MONTGOMERY'S STYLE to treat his predecessors in Africa with a negligence and an injustice for which he has been rightly criticised. It was not that he bore them malice or felt any jealousy towards them; it was simply that before his coming there had, in his view, been Chaos and Old Night, and that with him there began a totally new order. Whether or not there had been contingency plans for the evacuation of the Delta, there would be none now. Whether or not Auchinleck had already fought a decisive battle in the Alamein position, Montgomery was going to fight one now. Whether or not there were already plans for a defensive stand at Alam el Halfa with a refused left flank, Montgomery intended to make some. Whether or not commanders had acquitted themselves with credit fighting in the desert, Montgomery had no time for them if they were not prepared wholeheartedly to accept him as the new Messiah and fit into the pattern which he was imposing on events.

What that pattern was to be, he left no one under his command in any possible doubt—and that "no one" is inclusive. Montgomery knew that he was commanding *an Army*, and he made every member feel part of it. This his predecessors, with all their qualities, had not done. Until then the British forces in the Western Desert had consisted of units with splendid names and records—4th Indian, 9th Australian, 7th Armoured Divisions, 11th Hussars, 201st Guards Brigade—with their own heroic leaders and their own distinctive styles. Divisional commanders, sometimes even brigade and regimental commanders,

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were tribal chiefs over whom corps and army commanders uneasily and ineffectually presided, and who did not hesitate to question their orders if they did not like them. Auchinleck, with his tremendous personality, could keep them in order, but that should not have been his job; he had other things to do with his time. And outside these glamorous fighting units there were the scores of thousands of men in the base depots and on the lines of communication, whose morale and efficiency was no less essential to victory in mechanised warfare than that of the forward troops who depended on them for sustenance. For these men, "GHQ" was simply a sprawling office manned by faceless if uniformed bureaucrats who engendered an unending lava-flow of paper. The most they saw of a general was a scarlet flash of hat-band as a staff-car swept past in a swirl of dust.

But Montgomery knew, as few other British commanders knew, what a complex and fundamentally *unmilitary* organisation the wartime British Army was. He had watched it growing while he was commanding at home; seen these young and not so young men leave their suburban homes and their jobs in factories or shops, be put through hurried courses of basic and professional training and fitted out with their hideous if serviceable battledress and their insanely unserviceable forage-caps, and realised that, dutifully as they might rise to the occasion if properly managed, these men were *not* soldiers. The self-sacrificing young subalterns, the tough, deferential, uncomplaining privates who had died like lemmings on the Western Front in an earlier war had not bred their kind to replace them. These men wanted to stay alive, wanted to get home, wanted to know what was happening and why. They wanted a leader with whom they could identify themselves and who could speak to them directly. They needed something of a demagogue: someone who knew that rhetoric was once one of the classical military arts.

ALMOST BY ACCIDENT Montgomery learned how to play this role. He found that he *was* something of a demagogue—relaxed and happy with crowds, drawing from them and reflecting back their own emotions. Although unmistakably a General—that light, clipped voice, that erect bearing of command—he was not typical of his colleagues and he subtly emphasised his eccentricities. He learned how to handle that vital group which soldiers tend to regard as their natural enemies, the Press, and the Press rose to him. With their help he projected this charismatic image, not only throughout the Eighth Army which basked in his reflected glory, but throughout the Army as a whole, and the nation, and ultimately the world.

But neither his own talent for publicity nor the readiness with which the Press exploited it would have been of much enduring value if the image which he projected had not been in itself an effective one, and if it was not nourished by persistent professional success. It was not the image of a romantic leader demanding heroic sacrifices, but of a professional giving reliable reassurances; one who did not promise more than he could perform, and who was thoroughly, almost insolently on top of his job. There would inevitably be casualties, he indicated, but no more than strictly necessary to achieve the objective, and anything that foresight and ingenuity could do to minimise them would be done. The sonorous eloquence of Churchill had sustained the nation through three years when its very survival had seemed in doubt; but it was the brisk direct note struck by Montgomery that made victory appear, for the first time, to be an entirely practical proposition.

THAT IS WHY Montgomery's preparations for and conduct of the Battle of El Alamein had such resonance throughout the world and why comparison of his performance with that of his predecessors is a poor criterion to his actual achievement.

Much may legitimately be said in dispraise of him. First, if Auchinleck had not fought and won the First Battle of Alamein in July there would never have been a Second in October; and Montgomery's refusal to recognise this, either at the time or later, was only too typical of that total absence of generosity that so deeply flawed his character. Secondly, the plan which he made for the battle did not in the event work. He underestimated the logistical difficulties of moving such large masses in such small space and the speed and stubbornness of the enemy reaction. But his real talents then showed in a manner for which, interestingly enough, he has never claimed credit: in his refusal to be perturbed at the collapse of his plans, his calm reorganisation of his forces in the middle of the battle, and his capacity to remain totally in control of the chaotic situation and ultimately to impose his will on it. In this he showed those qualities of greatness as a commander which make it legitimate to suggest that even if he had not hugely outnumbered his enemy in tanks and guns, even if he had not enjoyed complete command of the air, even if Rommel's forces had not been paralysed for lack of food, and if Rommel himself had not been a sick and discouraged man, Montgomery would still have found some means to victory. As it was,

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he had the superiority and used it remorselessly. Alamein was a *bataille d'usure*, not a skilful manoeuvre. The casualties were grim enough: 13,500 dead, wounded and missing; but the victory was complete. Thirty thousand enemy prisoners were in British hands, and few of their formations remained intact.

Rommel was beaten, but he was not destroyed, and here is the third legitimate criticism that can be made of Montgomery. He excelled in the set-piece battle—the careful preparations, the ingenious deception, the thoroughness of the staff-work, the huge accumulation of fire to cover movement. But once that had succeeded the chapter was closed. He did not adjust himself rapidly to the needs of that most difficult and necessary of military operations, the pursuit. He was a Plumer rather than an Allenby. He would take no risks: too many had been taken by his predecessors, too many initial victories had been squandered by subsequent ill-judged dissipation of effort. Every move must be logistically sound; the quick striking head of his Army must not lose touch with the great cumbersome tail which had to heave itself out of the Delta and laboriously hump itself along the northern shore of Africa while Rommel got away with the remnants of his army. The pundits rightly mark Montgomery down for this. It would have been nice if Rommel could have been put in the bag, and the destruction of his élite forces would have made the subsequent capture of Tunisia a great deal easier. But in terms of the overall balance of the War it would have been a marginal advantage. The country lost little by Montgomery's caution, and to his credit must be counted every British life that was thereby saved.

IT TOOK THE Eighth Army nearly 20 weeks to reach Tunisia, a journey of 1,000 miles. There, at Medenine, they fought first a successful defensive battle in prepared positions from which, as at Alam el Halfa, they refused to be drawn; then a less happy battle at the Mareth Line, where their initial attack was repulsed in some disorder, but where Montgomery once again, as at El Alamein, calmly reorganised in the middle of the battle and started again, with decisive results; and finally at the Wadi Akarit, a surprise assault which went like clockwork—a battle of almost Mozartian balance and precision, which was in many ways Montgomery's finest achievement. It was also the end of the run.

A few days later he hit the mountains, which he never learned to master, and the Americans, whom he never learned to understand. Pinned down in front of Enfidaville the Eighth Army realised for the first time why the First Army had taken so long to reach Tunis. Montgomery had to ask for help; and it was the quiet General Alexander who now stepped forward, gathered both forces together and administered, with the deft elegance of a matador, the *coup de grâce*.

Montgomery was not perturbed. He was the hero of the hour and knew it. He was already in direct correspondence with the Prime Minister. Returning to London in his idiosyncratic uniform —the beret with two badges (one of them nothing to do with him), the sweater protruding beneath his beltless battledress blouse—he found himself a national celebrity and traded on the fact. Whatever he did now, they would not sack him. There now loomed ahead the invasion of Sicily, a highly complex operation involving the land, sea and air forces of three nations, of which Eisenhower was in overall command and Alexander in charge of the land forces. Montgomery's position was simply that of commander of one of the two land armies involved. But when briefed about the overall plan, he responded with breath-taking insolence: "I am prepared to carry the war into Sicily with the Eighth Army but must do so in my own way." His own way involved the abandonment of a separate task for the American Third Army—the capture of Palermo while the Eighth Army drove north to Catania

The Stepdaughter
Caroline Blackwood

'Caroline Blackwood's first novel is quite brilliant . . . An exceptional feat of skill . . . Form, style, content and perception are brought together so immaculately, with such absence of strain . . . This book demonstrates a major talent.' Jacky Gillott

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and Messina—and its reduction to the role of a flank guard to the British force. The plan was tactically sound enough, and General Eisenhower had the wisdom to acknowledge it. But after the landings—when the Eighth Army found it could make no progress in the plain of Catania and pushed the Americans off one of the few main roads in order to improve its chances—the Third Army under General Patton understandably revolted. Alexander belatedly freed them from their humiliating servitude, and Patton at once showed his genius by a great sweep round the island which not only captured Palermo but brought him into Messina several hours before the British. Certainly the British had had to contend with Hitler's toughest units in the mountainous foothills guarding the approaches to Etna; but it was not only the Americans who felt more than a twinge of *Schadenfreude* at Patton's well-deserved success.

MONTGOMERY IN FACT WAS NOW entering the doldrums. He had not shone in Sicily, and there were no laurels to be won in Italy either. His elaborate preparations for crossing the Straits of Messina proved an absurd over-insurance when his troops landed on that undefended shore. He could do little to affect the issue at Salerno and did not show any great urgency in attempting to do so. Slogging up the east coast he was confronted with ridge after ridge of mountain through which there was no short cut; no alternative to a series of assaults in worsening weather which he could do no more than deliver with as much effectiveness and as few casualities as possible. Serving in a subordinate position, on a secondary front and in villainous terrain, this, after all the glorious tumult of the past year, must have been difficult indeed for Montgomery to endure.

But it was not to last for long. At the end of the year he departed to take command of Allied ground forces for the forthcoming Normandy landings, perhaps the most complex military enterprise in the history of the world. In some respects he was the obvious choice. He was now Britain's best-known soldier, and his appointment—once again, the decision of Alan Brooke—gave confidence not only to the troops under his command but to the great mass of civilians who constituted their operational base that this hazardous operation was going to be a success. And it was a well deserved confidence. Montgomery had mastered the art which officers brought up in the small British Army had so little chance to learn—that of commanding large formations in the field. His command ultimately embraced some forty divisions, and his only complaint was that it was not larger still. The larger the responsibility, the more truly was he in his element.

BUT FUNCTIONING ON THIS SCALE he could not be his own master. The single vision that he wished to impose on events, the "master plan" of which he so often spoke and wrote, had to be adjusted and complicated to fit in with that of colleagues, and in the process misunderstanding and conflicts arose in which he was not constitutionally inclined to compromise. So long as he remained in supreme command of all land forces all went well. As in Sicily he insisted that the over-ambitious proposals prepared before he took command should be reduced to provide that greater concentration of force which in his view was needed to guarantee success. As at Alamein he saw that no detail of preparation should be omitted, no resource of power or ingenuity should be spared to ensure initial success. The smoothness with which debarkation occurred on the British beaches, in contrast to the bloody shambles at the American, owed much to his anxious forethought. As at Alamein, the "dog-fight" that followed the "break-in" saw some clumsy handling of armour. The dusty traffic jams, the confusion and ultimate repulse of Tenth Armoured Division's advance through XXX Corps at Alamein was to be repeated in Normandy in the ill-fated operations "Epsom" and "Goodwood." But once again the grinding attrition exhausted a weaker enemy whose communications were anyhow rendered almost impassable by air attack and sabotage, until there came the moment of collapse when the planned break-out could begin. Alamein was in many respects a dress-rehearsal for this, the climactic battle in the West in the Second World War; and this time the break-out was in the hands of General George Patton himself—a man supremely well qualified to conduct it.

WITH THE END of the Battle of Normandy in August 1944 Montgomery reached the peak of his career and the pinnacle of success. The last year of the War was to be less happy for him. General Eisenhower moved across from England to assume a control of operations which Montgomery deeply resented. He could not accept that he was now just a member of a team and, with the huge increase of American forces under the command of General Bradley, no longer even a senior member. His reiterated, almost querulous, demands that there should be a single commander of ground forces, and that all resources should be concentrated on a single thrust, could be all too easily interpreted in terms of personal ambition rather than sound strategic thinking. In fact the two were not incompatible.

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Without a single command there could be no master plan, and without a master plan one had, as Montgomery constantly put it, a cat's (or alternatively, a dog's) breakfast. To see his clarity of vision, his inner conviction of success, sacrificed on the altar of inter-Allied politics, overridden by a supreme commander for whom he barely attempted to conceal his contempt, was bitter indeed.

But the master plan which Montgomery formulated for the defeat of Germany in the autumn of 1944 was a most untypical one. Gone was the concern for careful preparation, for a sound logistic base, and for overwhelming material superiority which had distinguished his earlier battles. What he now proposed was a daring thrust into the heart of Germany by the forces under his command—a distance of some 500 miles from the nearest supply bases, of which the principal one was still the Mulberry Harbour on the open beaches of Arromanches. The Arnhem disaster showed only too clearly what happened when troops over-extended themselves; and Montgomery made no particular provision in his plan even for clearing the port of Antwerp. It was in fact a gigantic gamble on the state of German morale, and there was little evidence in the behaviour of German armies either before or later to indicate that it might have come off. The Ardennes counter-offensive in December was only the most spectacular demonstration of their capacity for rapid recovery—and one which illustrated both Montgomery's ability to rise superbly to emergencies and his self-destructive tendency to spoil his successes by the tactless arrogance with which he discussed them. Even more significant than this "Battle of the Bulge" was the dour and bitter fighting in the Reichswald in the early months of 1945 when Hitler forced the Allies to pay, for every yard of German soil they occupied, a heavy price in blood. Only after that, when the last ounce of effort had been squeezed out of the Wehrmacht west of the Rhine, could the final triumph come. But until the very end Montgomery was discontented with his role and was demanding a greater share of resources and a change in Eisenhower's plans so that he could end the War with the apotheosis which would come with the capture of Berlin.

IT WAS MONTGOMERY'S MISFORTUNE that the talents for military command with which he was so superbly equipped were not enough in themselves, in 20th-century warfare, to fit a man for the supreme heights of responsibility where politics and strategy become indistinguishable. Once he left the comparatively sheltered waters of an Army command for the open seas of higher strategy, the confusion of political cross-currents and contrary winds made his "master plans" impossible. There one needed qualities of insight and tact which he had never learned to cultivate. To use a metaphor which he applied prolifically to others, he rose above his ceiling. Nevertheless the instinct of the British people in singling him out as the symbol of victory, a "mascot" transcending profession and class, was a sound one. No British commander in the War showed a better grasp of the intricacies of his appallingly difficult profession, and none showed a better understanding of the men that he led.

International Commentary

Europe: Politics, not Social Reform

A Reply to Shanks—By ANDREW SHONFIELD

THE ROME TREATY is, as Michael Shanks says (in the May ENCOUNTER) inadequate as a guide to the priorities of policy for Western Europe in the 1970s. The commitments which it got governments to undertake in 1957-8—above all, the commitment to break down national barriers impeding the free movement of goods and of people between the member countries—are not our chief preoccupation today. It does not, however, by any means follow that the way to improve the performance of the European Community today is as Shanks proposes, to get those concerned to sit down and produce another "blueprint"—a European social treaty to complement the politico-economic one. I believe, in fact, that that would be a diversion of precious political energy, none too abundant in Europe at the moment anyway, to most un-

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promising tasks. There happen to be other tasks of considerable urgency, as I shall show later, which demand the concentrated attention of the West European governments who have recently begun to acquire a capacity for acting together, in ways not seen before.

But first I should explain why I see no promise in the effort to write another blueprint, a second Treaty of Rome. We must remember that governments in 1957-8 committed themselves to the treaty, which many people and interest groups in the six original member countries regarded as very unattractive in detail and likely to prove inconvenient in practice, only because of a quite exceptional combination of powerful political motives. The chief thing was the coalescence between France's extreme nervousness about the re-emergence of West German power under active US patronage and the overwhelming determination of Dr Adenauer's Bonn Republic to work its passage back to the status of a civilised, independent and trustworthy nation, demonstrably a reliable partner in a great Western endeavour. The other nations that were involved—Italy, Holland, Belgium—were ready to promise quite a lot at that stage just in order to ensure that they would not be left on their own in the uncertain post-War world's power system which was beginning to emerge—isolated small nations, the minor objects of decisions by the great powers—but that they would have permanent bargaining rights and recognised positions inside a collective European entity. They did indeed secure that end; and it cannot now be taken away from them. There is absolutely no reason to suppose that the original Six (including Luxembourg)—let alone the additional Three, Britain, Denmark, Ireland, who came in later when experience had given convincing proof that the advantages of Community membership could be had without paying an inconveniently high price—would be willing today to sign another treaty with a new set of demanding obligations. They have each already got most of what they were after.

THE CONSTANTLY USED CLICHÉ in the debate about the future of the Community, especially prevalent in Brussels, is the one about the need for "political will." Wherever three bureaucrats are joined together the phrase will be heard, sooner rather than later, accompanied by much nodding of heads. It is an evasion of the real problem because it suggests, and not only to the men in Brussels, that what is at fault is simply the lack of moral fibre on the part of the politicians in the nine capitals of the Community. If only they were better and more courageous men. . . . Political will in these speeches sounds like something which you could acquire if you only set your mind to it, like the habit of getting up at six in the morning and having a cold shower. In this way many of those whose business it is to analyse the political forces which will determine the probable direction and style of the Community seem to argue instead, in a manner strangely reminiscent of Chairman Mao, as if the only feasible form of progress were a great (moral) leap forward. I believe that the latest Tindemans Report[1] on the future of the Community is vitiated once again, in spite of some useful ideas which it contains, by this familiar defect.

EVEN IF THE GOVERNMENTS of the nine countries were in fact prepared to enter into a new formal compact, additional to the Rome Treaty, I am most doubtful whether they would be likely to apply themselves to the subject which Michael Shanks recommends for their special attention—the construction of a new European social order. And I think they would be right to be wary of it. The reason why relates to certain important changes in the performance and capacity of the different nations of Western Europe which have become clearly apparent during the 1970s. The most striking feature of the period is that the economic performance of the different members of the Community increasingly tends to diverge.

The most obvious aspect of this divergence is the economic polarisation between Germany, on the one hand, and Britain and Italy on the other. But in the longer run it is far from certain that France will be able to keep up with the high economic standard set by Germany. The sudden violent burst of speculation against the French franc in the spring of this year which led to the exit of the franc, for the second time in two years, from the European "currency snake" was a foretaste of the kind of trouble which Paris is likely to have in the future in making its ambitious high spending programme at home fit with its external objectives. When it has become evident that the difference in the capacity of individual nations to afford the desirable objectives of social welfare policy is large and increasing all the time, they will not feel that they are advancing their purposes, either individually or collectively, by trying to formulate a common social programme. The fact is that the Germans and the Dutch can, *and do*, give their unemployed workers and their old-age pensioners a far higher real income than the British and the Italians provide for their people. The only way in which the setting of

[1] "European Union", Supplement 1, 1976, *Bulletin of European Communities.*

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social minima for the unemployed, the old or any other disadvantaged group would make sense would be if the new common levels set were higher than those at present attained by the British and Italians and were paid for by the transfer of the necessary funds from the richer members of the Community to the poorer. But why should a relatively badly-off German, Dutchman or Frenchman, who is unemployed or retired, accept a levelling-down of his social security or pension payments in order to raise those of the British and Italians? Alternatively, if the would-be providers are wage-earners in jobs, then why should they agree to an increase in their already high social-security contributions to serve this purpose?

WE ARE BACK TO the fundamental question about the degree of political identity shared by the citizens of the Community. Whatever governments may be ready to do about sharing the making of decisions with other members of the Community, the willingness of citizens to share their incomes in a similar way is very small. It follows that to put the main emphasis in Western Europe policy on social solidarity among the members of the Nine would be to risk straining the incipient and still very fragile sense of solidarity among the nations of the Community to breaking point.

The truth is that national governments are more ready to contemplate the hard options implicit in common Community policies than are the peoples of Western Europe. All this goes against the grain of traditional Community mythology—which is that ordinary Europeans are eager to unite with one another, but narrow-minded national governments are impeding the process. This view is expressed in its simplest form by old-style Federalists in the proposal that some device be found for setting up a European Constituent Assembly which would appeal over the heads of the governments directly to the peoples of Europe, forcing the politicians to unite. It is a wholly unrealistic political dream. National governments may not be up to much, but they are the best friends that the Community has got.

WHAT THEY NOW have to cope with is the built-in economic divergence in Western Europe. The European Community was in fact constructed on the implicit assumption of increasing convergence. The free movement of goods and the factors of production would spread the resources of Europe evenly across the whole area. Standards of living, rates of progress, levels of taxes in the different member states—all would inexorably become more equal. That vision, it can be seen, enormously simplified the politics of Community solidarity. If national economic inequalities were very largely eliminated, the contribution demanded from individual nations for an equally shared collective purpose would require only marginal transfers of resources from one country to another. Economic convergence was to be the great political solvent.

One response to the failure of this expectation is to argue, as Michael Shanks does, that we must in effect double our stakes. We must seek by administrative means, above all through a greatly increased social budget, to arrive at the equality which the market forces of the Common Market have failed to provide. As I have indicated, I am very sceptical about the political prospect for any such endeavour. That is not to say that certain social purposes cannot be usefully served by common action on the part of the Community. There would, for example, be a great deal to be gained from Shanks's suggestion of a common set of rules governing the treatment of migrant workers and their families within the Community. But my reason for singling out this particular proposal, as against the other desirable social improvements which he suggests, is that it is clearly locked into the accepted purposes of the Common Market as set out in the Rome Treaty. It is obvious that you cannot have the "free movement of workers within the European Community" if foreign workers have quite different rights and are subject to very different regulations in one member-country from those in another. I would go further and argue that the logic of freedom of movement commits member governments *in the end* not only to common regulations but also to a common immigration quota.

The example of migrant workers—and it is by no means the only one where a common social policy by the Community is required—points to another observation: the continuing vitality of the original principle underlying the Common Market, *i.e.* the principle of freedom of movement for goods, people, and money. Getting rid of the impediments of frontiers is still what a great deal of the business of the Community is about. Now, when nations are asked to agree to more freedom of movement—whether it is for a doctor to practise anywhere, or for a lorry driver to take his vehicle and ply for trade in any part of the Community—they want to make certain that the same minimum conditions of work and performance, which governments normally impose on these people, are being met.

Thus, to take a current case, the British lorry driver is thought to work too many hours at a stretch. The other European Community

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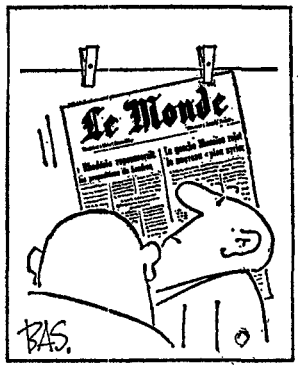
Paris



IF *France's most prestigious newspaper can be charged with something so vulgar as crude bias, then nothing Gallic is sacred. The paper in question is, of course, the Paris daily* Le Monde, *and the* j'accuse *is made in a book,* Le Monde tel qu'il est, *by Michel Legris, a "defector" who was a member of its staff for 16 years till his resignation in 1972.*

This newspaper of extraordinary quality has a large circulation—between 500,000 and 600,000—and unlike most ailing French newspapers it makes a profit. As part of the establishment and also of the opposition it is at once respectable and disrespectful. For anyone in an influential position or profession it is compulsory reading.[1] *It is more than just a newspaper; it is a power in the land, an institution, and indeed the only one in France that since May 1968 has not had its own round of* contestation. *Now it appears to lack altogether that spirit of enlightened self-criticism in the face of an attack that it expected to be rigorously displayed by the Government, the Church, the Army, the Courts and the Universities. It appears to regard any critique of itself as motivated by plotters and intriguers, the result of dire machinations by darkly envious reactionaries. In a box on the front page of the issue of 24 March its founder M. Hubert Beuve-Méry, the present editor M. Jacques Fauvet, and the general manager dismissed the book. They did not mention its author or title, and simply announced tersely that vilification always rebounds on the vilifier. On page 17 the book was also given a short trouncing without going into any details. Later it was announced that M. Jacques Fauvet would deal with the book again—in* Le Figaro, *as a reply to Raymond Aron's critique.*

VILIFICATION? *Michel Legris's book is a piece of polemical pamphleteering, but it uses many exact quotations and is never crudely argued.* Le Monde's *almost hysterical reaction in fact provided Michel Legris with his best argument; and it turned the book into a* cause célèbre. *To what does the ex-*Monde *author take exception? He indicts his old newspaper for its mixture of prejudice and pseudo-objectivity, and he concentrates on a few examples —first of all Portugal where it consistently supported the military dictatorship of the generals and Cunhal's Communists against the democratic parties that ultimately won the elections. Jacques Fauvet wrote a reply to his critics on the Right (*Le Figaro*) and the Left (*Nouvel Observateur*) which only revealed how offended he was.*

Michel Legris' book, though not nearly as good as it might have been, has been for weeks on the Paris best-seller list. And the crude reaction of the editors has provoked criticism on the intellectual Left where the paper could least expect it. Jean-Marie Domenach (editor of the monthly Esprit *and a regular contributor to* Le Monde*) has joined the attack in unequivocal terms in his review; so has the historian Pierre Nora (editor of two famous Gallimard series, the "Bibliotheque des sciences humaines" and "Archives"), who expressed, in* Le Nouvel Observateur, *his dismay about* Le Monde's *incapacity for taking criticism seriously.*

One apt point against Legris' book was made by Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber in his L'Express. *The deputy for Nancy recalled that* Le Monde *under its previous editor, Hubert Beuve-Méry, was as biased as it is today; and he suggested that the old pretence of "objectivity" was more damnable than the present open "commitment." (One remembers the scandal in the 1950s of the faked "Fechteler report" in which a US Admiral was supposed to have revealed America's imminent abandonment of Western Europe!) In an inconclusive TV debate editor André Fontaine was confronted with Michel Legris—on the biased reports on Cambodia, Fontaine's excuse was that, after all, they were of much the same tendency that was reflected in the widely-respected liberal* Manchester Guardian! *Q.E.D. . . .*

LEGRIS WAS ALSO OUTRAGED **by the reporting from Phnom Penh: that capital's popular enthusiasm for the Red Khmer was followed by the expulsion of the whole of its population, including all the patients in the hospitals. "How many of these patients may have died in the streets?" the** Le Monde **reporter wrote sorrowfully, only to find prompt consolation in the thought: "How many would have died anyway in the squalor of those hospitals?"**

There is a shock of recognition here, for more and more readers are finding that the newspaper that was once their Bible is no longer so "authoritative" and completely "reliable." True, it remains "indispensable"; but once it was generally read in a spirit of awe and devotion. Recently many of its readers have been adopting towards it the sceptical attitude that the French have towards their other awesome authorities. Like the President of the Republic and the professors, the generals, the judges, and all the other pillars of the establishment, Le Monde *will have to learn to live with* contestation.

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[1] See, Richard Mayne, "Demi-Monde", ENCOUNTER (October 1969).

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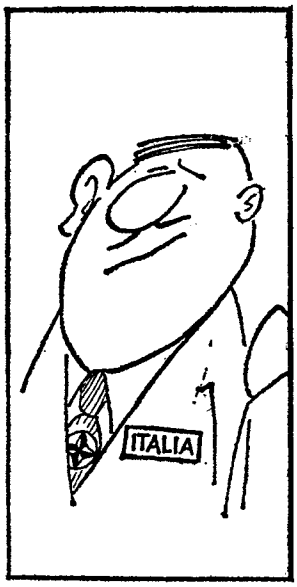
Milan



"IT MAKES *no great difference whether the prince is in power or is only the presumed successor of the ruling prince. On the contrary, the presumptive heir enjoys more prestige and stimulates so many people to throw in their lot with the man of the future. . . .*"

Those words were written a decade ago by the brilliant Italian critic Nicola Chiaromonte.[1] *He noted at the time that Communism offered Italian intellectuals*

"a substitute for social conscience without any testing or criticism of ideas, a new conformism, a way of putting oneself in the service of 'progress', 'history', the 'proletariat', without having to make the slightest change in one's way of living or thinking."

Ten years later these remarks are more applicable than ever. There are many cases—though few are publicly known—of insidious pressure on publishers and authors, of pre-censorship. I referred in these pages a few months ago ("European Notebook", ENCOUNTER, *April, p. 62) to the drastic blue-pencillings of an Italian state television interview with Andrey Sinyavsky; and he protested against the cuts in vain. As he put it to the Naples conference of the Italian liberals, "It is horrifying to find Communist censorship already at work in the country even before the Party has come to governmental power. . . ." Several big publishers practise what is known in Italy as "Feltrinellizzazione" (after the leading publishing firm of that name), and the process is also known as "instrumentalizzazione" and "egemonizzazione",* i.e. *everything is being judged by its "instrumental" value in bringing about a certain cultural-political hegemony.*

The most dramatic victims (not unlike Lenin's first Russian purges after October 1917) are figures on the Left, intellectuals of dissident Marxian or radical persuasion. In the current "Settembrini Case" the D'Anna publishing house conceded that it was leaning backwards in order to avoid offending the sensibilities of Communist readers and especially orthodox young Marxist students. Among the editorial changes it insisted upon, in an anthology of Socialist and Anarchist writings, was the omission of a reference to "human degradation in Stalin's Russia." "Our culture is already on its knees", Domenico Settembrini has said, "and I can't see why the Communists are going to 'liberalise' an already illiberal atmosphere. . . ."

A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE **was that of Armando Saitta, Professor of History in the University of Rome, who is the author of many widely-read textbooks. His latest book, published by "La Nuova Italia", headed by Tristano Codignola, was censored and altered. In addition, extra matter was interpolated which was not written by him; his permission was not sought, nor was he even informed. When the weekly** *Europeo*, **which is itself on the Left, took up the matter it was admonished from several quarters not to break the "left-wing front" by publishing anything about it. Codignola himself bluntly declared: "I know where Saitta now stands—the whole thing is obviously a Fascist provocation—and to avoid getting involved in his manoeuvre I refuse to say any more about it."**

The censored passages included comments on the various Italian regions, the political parties, and the trade unions. Here is an example: "The danger exists that the regions are turning into preserves for party clienteles instead of into the centres of democratic life which the constitution intended." Everyone knows that that is true, but it was not allowed to be printed. Why, Saitta asks, didn't the publisher at least remove my name from the jacket? To this Codignola has merely replied: "We have our publishing and political dignity to preserve."

Dignity all'italiana *is like the Sophia Loren divorce in the well-known film which similarly swept all difficulties under the carpet. Still, there are a great many small publishers who are struggling to preserve an exemplary independence. I spoke the other day to the art historian Vanni Scheiwiler who publishes in Milan. But Signor Scheiwiler is pessimistic; he says that under the influence of the new conformism the city, after all the cultural centre of Italy, has been undergoing a decline in intellectual vitality. "Anyone who comes up with something that does not fit in with the line is promptly put down by being called a Fascist. The word Fascist is repeated so often that one wonders whether it hasn't lost all meaning!"*

This reminded me of what Ignazio Silone said in 1945 soon after he returned to Italy from his Zurich exile: "The Fascism of tomorrow will never say 'I am Fascism.' It will say: 'I am anti-Fascism.' "

★

[1] He died in Rome in 1972 (see the memoir by Paolo Milano in ENCOUNTER, May 1972). A collection of his articles, some of which appeared in ENCOUNTER, has recently been edited by Miriam Chiaromonte and published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich (New York and London) with a preface by Mary McCarthy: *The Worm of Consciousness & Other Essays* (1976).

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countries will not let him compete in their markets on equal terms unless he is subject to more demanding welfare regulations, of the kind applied elsewhere in Europe, about minimum rest periods and maximum length of the working day. There is a long-standing row about this with the Transport and General Workers Union in Britain, who resist this kind of "outside interference." But it seems to me to be one of the salutary consequences of Community membership that there is pressure for low national standards to be levelled up.

BUT ALL THIS BARELY TOUCHES the urgent political question—what can be done with the European Community during a period of growing economic divergence?

I say it is an urgent question because the evidence suggests that international politics in the 1970s and 1980s will not be of a kind to offer the West Europeans what they enjoyed in the 1960s—a comfortable shelter under the wing of one of the Super-powers while they concentrate on sorting out their local affairs. A less stable world with more centres of independent power and more turbulent frontiers (some of the most turbulent bordering directly on the Community itself) will demand a much more substantial

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Zurich

ALEXANDER SOLZHENITSYN *told the Spaniards on Radio Madrid recently not to feel too badly about their present post-Franco political transition and to enjoy certain personal and cultural liberties which Soviet subjects hardly dare dream about.*

Evidently they should not jeopardise that happy state by unconsidered political activity, for behind the illusion that still greater freedom was attainable lurked the danger of an irreversible plunge into a real species of totalitarian dictatorship.

In his speech to American trade union leaders he regretted and deplored that the Americans had ever allowed themselves to be involved with the Soviet Union, for the threat from Hitler's Germany had never been dangerous enough to justify it.

In his interview on the BBC which attracted so much notice he said that the strength of people who had lived under a totalitarian dictatorship was that they were able "to see things in their true perspective", and this was something which the people of the West were incapable of . . . in spite of—perhaps because of—their freedom.

Such utterances, based on little knowledge of the West and lamentably untouched by self-criticism, may well suit those who have always been made to feel uncomfortable by Solzhenitsyn, the witness and chronicler of the Gulag horrors, but could not say so; but they are also increasingly embarrassing to those who admire his character and spirit, among whom I number myself. The recent critiques by Raymond Aron, Heinrich Böll, and Richard Lowenthal[1] have discussed this fairly and thoughtfully; but now that more and more provocative statements are in circulation there is something that must be added.

In the first place, Solzhenitsyn has expressed definitive views on complex matters on which he lacks anything that can be called empirical knowledge. That is no reason to pay him back in the same coinage. Those who have not read "Gulag"*—the third (and, in my view, greatest) volume is now available in French—and his other books should beware of passing a sweeping judgment on him. He was discomfiting enough when he confronted us with truths. Now that he at once expresses views that we must applaud and others that we do not accept (or indeed actually oppose) he forces us to differentiate. The Solzhenitsyn testimony remains; the political implications remain to be discussed, or perhaps to be ignored.*

But there is, I think, a "bon usage de" Solzhenitsyn, and it presupposes a detailed knowledge of his works. For instance:

"The seal of compulsory thought has deformed us all, has not left a single brain unwounded."

And this (also from "Voices from the Rubble"*):*

"Nowhere in our spiritual isolation can we test our views against each other."

In the East, he argued the inevitable limitation of perspectives, and in this he exhibited more insight than in all his long-range statements on radio and television in the West. If after ten whole days in the country he tells the hapless Spaniards that they are rather well off in comparison with the régime that he knows, an answer presents itself:

"Each of us wallows in his own squalor, and no one's misery is mitigated by his neighbour's."

That too was written by Solzhenitsyn.

François Bondy

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[1] See Raymond Aron, "A Reply to; Solzhenitsyn", ENCOUNTER, September 1975, Richard Lowenthal, "Solschenizyn in Amerika: der wahre Prophet und die falsche Botschaft", *Merkur* (Munich), November 1975; Heinrich Böll, in *Die Weltwoche*.

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contribution to international relations from the West Europeans than they have supplied so far. The experience of the mid-1970s—with the Arabs and, more generally, with the Third World countries—has already shown that they are not going to be able to escape. The Americans, too, will this time insist that they do not. To put the matter in only slightly over-simplified political shorthand—if the Americans are left without a European Community foreign policy they will aim to manage transatlantic affairs, and much else besides, on the basis of a US-German alliance.

So my answer to the question about "what the Community should do next" is that it should hurry along further on the course on which it has already embarked—the course of greatly intensified political consultation, especially at the summit, leading to an ability to parley more effectively with the outside world. Here, if anywhere, it has a capacity for significant joint endeavour, *in spite of* economic divergence. The instruments for this endeavour, like the European Council meeting at prime minister/president level three times a year, are so recent that their practical potential in the long run cannot yet be measured. But they certainly represent a significant novelty in the conduct of international relations.

SOME FOUR YEARS AGO, in my Reith Lectures, I argued that what the Community needed to do most of all during the 1970s was to develop an effective instrument of "crisis management."[2] I was concerned with the prospect of internal political crises, like Italy's, as well as with external ones. A number of them were plainly inevitable in the course of the remainder of the decade. In retrospect, I can see that it was a bad moment to try to persuade either the British public or the people in Brussels about the primacy of politics—traditional, intergovernmental, Alliance politics—in Western Europe. The British were obsessed with the debate about national economic self-interest in Europe; and the Europeans in Brussels were launched on another one of their technical gimmicks—it was the heyday of the "currency snake"—which was supposed to produce a foolproof short-cut to union. It was like talking earnestly to two people on either side of you only to discover that one was deaf in the left ear and the other in the right, both being the ears nearest you.

By now much of what was obscure then, or wilfully misunderstood, has become much clearer. We may even have reached the end of the era of Community gimmicks—so that we can get on with the useful and still very extensive work of completing the Common Market without being diverted by the promise of some sudden overnight advance towards European Union. The economic programme will not take over and shape the political. Nor will the social programme. Western Europe is not yet capable of building a common society. But it has the beginnings of a more effective polity. The external pressures working on this group of countries which, for all the economic divergences, hold a number of assumptions in common about the aims and methods of politics are quite likely to induce the habit of a collective response. It will not always happen. Most recently, the open differences among the Nine on Third World policies at the UNCTAD conference in May were in striking contrast to the united policy front with which they faced the Soviet Union at the long European Security Conference right up to its conclusion in the summer of 1975. But there is a fair chance that it will happen increasingly often.

That is said with the major proviso that the Community stays with the membership that it has now. An extension of its geographical boundaries into the Mediterranean area, with the importation of different political modes and habits, would create a degree of heterogeneity that would be likely, at any rate in the short run, to be fatal to the political enterprise. What happens about Greece's application for membership which, if favourable, could hardly avoid being followed by other South European countries will, therefore, have profound consequences. These will go far beyond the risks of offending a country which is trying hard to establish its bona fides as a democracy, and will affect the politics of international relations at large. It is going to be hard enough—though not, in my view, impossible—to keep Italy and Britain going as effective members of the West European system during the next 10 years. But it would be wanton to try to domesticate the turbulence of Southern Europe by taking it inside the Community.

[2] See *Europe: Journey to an Unknown Destination*, Chapter 6 (Penguin 1973). This provided one of the rare occasions in the course of my series of lectures when something that I said gave rise to a lively letter from a listener in an otherwise flaccid correspondence. A lady wrote to complain angrily about my scheme for "Christ's management"—a characteristic piece of European arrogance, she seemed to think.

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Miracles of Metamorphosis

Gustav Mahler—By PETER PORTER

SOMETHING IN MAHLER'S personality and perhaps in his music brings out an autobiographical strain in his commentators. David Holbrook's approach[1] is deeply confessional (though admirably objective in many of its musical insights), as is Bruno Walter's[2] in a more straightforward way, and even Professor Donald Mitchell, in the course of a very ample survey,[3] tells us about his own pilgrimage in the vast world of Mahler's art. So it may be in order for a reviewer to begin at his own beginnings and relate how he was first drawn to Mahler's music. In my experience, one is converted to Mahler in a "road-to-Damascus" way. One doesn't simply absorb him as one does, say, Mozart. It's difficult to say what the opposition in one's mind is at the point of conversion: it must differ for each generation. I came to Mahler very young (it is the bad habit of Old Believers like myself to insist that we loved and esteemed Mahler before he became the Tchaikovsky *de nos jours*. It is unfair also, of course, to use Tchaikovsky, a great and original composer, as the model of the public's mindless enthusiasm). The works I got to know were those on record before the Second World War—namely *Das Lied von der Erde*, the Ninth Symphony, the Second Symphony, the songs *Ich atmet einem Linden duft* and *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen*—followed immediately after the war by the Fourth Symphony and *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*.

At this time orthodoxy in musical circles maintained that Mahler was sentimental, inflated, banal and unhealthy in a peculiarly Central European way. Doubters, reading of Mahler's Promethean status today—see Stockhausen's introduction to de la Grange's monumental first volume of biography[4]—will hardly believe the low standing Mahler enjoyed as late as 1950. Geoffrey Sharp, writing on the Fourth Symphony in the Penguin book of *The Symphony*, edited by Ralph Hill, could still speak of "farmyard noises" in the first movement. Another Penguin of the same period refers to Bruckner as "the prolix Anton." Eric Blom wrote off all Mahler except *Das Lied*. If Mahler was praised, it was for his brilliant orchestration, and that put him in a fairly low company, or at least one viewed with suspicion—Berlioz, Rimsky-Korsakov, Strauss, Stravinsky. These are old battles, but they were more than flashes over the horizon when I first listened to Mahler's music.

There had been another orthodoxy (perhaps one could call it the knowing, Central European attitude). This centred on Mahler the great conductor, Director of the Vienna Opera, opponent of *Schlamperei*, subject of every expatriate Viennese's best anecdotes. It always seemed to me to have been built by mistake round a personality more like Franz Werfel's than Mahler's, but this may have been the insidious influence of Alma Mahler's writings—both her memoir of her first husband and that truly dreadful book, *And the Bridge is Love*. David Holbrook, however, makes out a convincing case for Alma as much more the true-hearted wife and helper in Mahler's last years. The score of the last movement of Symphony No 10 is covered with invocations of her name—"to live, to die, for you, Almschi" etc. Neverthless, I cannot accept this Central European Mahler any more than I could the former English academic opinion which wrote him off. It seems to me extremely important that we separate Mahler from Schoenberg, and do not credit him with being the father of modern music. (That role, as Wilfrid Mellers has pointed out when discussing Messiaen, should go, most probably, to Debussy.)

ONE OF THE CHIEF VIRTUES of Holbrook's study is its insistence on the heroic and fulfilled in

[1] *Gustav Mahler—And the Courage To Be*. By DAVID HOLBROOK. Vision Press, £7.95, paper £3.95.
[2] *Gustav Mahler*. By BRUNO WALTER. Severn House, £3.75.
[3] *Gustav Mahler: The Wunderhorn Years*. By DONALD MITCHELL. Faber & Faber, £15.
[4] Henry-Louis de la Grange, *Mahler: A Biography* (Gollancz, 1974).

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Mahler's music. Though not everyone will go as far in attacking so much of modern art for its nihilism and sadism, it is easy to agree with him that the tension in Mahler's music (especially in the Ninth and Tenth Symphonies) is redemptive rather than destructive. And though Mahler was the idol of the new Viennese school, his particular vein of idealism was not "progressive" in a modernist sense. Holbrook makes much of the colossal dissonance at the climax of the first movement of the Tenth Symphony (surely the most disturbing sound in all symphonic music). Such a dissonance makes sense only in a closed system of harmony, and I can detect little evidence that Mahler would have been sympathetic to either atonality or dodecaphonic composition. Extreme chromaticism, linear harmony, contrapuntal ingenuity—Mahler uses these more and more in his later compositions—but, at the same time, he remains devoted to diatonic and pentatonic melodies, to extreme simplicity of means when such are suitable. The last movement of the Tenth Symphony has a backward-looking simplicity (and not just in Deryck Cooke's performing version; it is there in Mahler's short score) quite at variance with the cast of Schoenberg's mind, and probably unrealisable in the musical language which Schoenberg imposed on the second Viennese school.

Mahler is not, however, a summing-up of the past, as Richard Strauss might be said to be. This is what makes Holbrook's study so interesting. He presents Mahler as a psychological innovator, rather than a stylistic one. Just as Freud (Holbrook employs Kleinian terms on the whole) opened a panel into the human soul, and so remains timeless despite the period flavour of his writing, so Mahler demonstrated in music the principle of change whereby the unpleasant and death-filled (hate in Holbrook's terminology) is not overcome, but transformed into serenity and peace. This is a very different thing to the triumphant opposition to death offered by Beethoven. Holbrook sensibly points out that we cannot "overcome" death, since we all must die. But we can transform our fear of it into celebration of life.

MAHLER'S ART IS ALL transformation—change, metamorphosis, not just of themes and their harmonies, but of programmatic ideas associated with the themes, of emotions and circumstances. Donald Mitchell, in his exhaustive examination of the first four symphonies and their associated songs, stresses Mahler's technique of variation. Mitchell's enormously elaborate and well-documented analysis can nevertheless be summarised in much the same way as Holbrook's psychologically-slanted presentation of a quite different part of Mahler's corpus—here we have a composer of a unique order, whose modifications of traditional forms are evolutionary in technique and whose music is a paradigm of the pilgrimage of the imagination through fear and opposition to truth and reconciliation.

IF ALL THIS STRIKES a reader as unbearably high-flown, I had better amplify it by underlining what so many of Mahler's early opponents thought was their best charge against him—his banality. Whether one gives great or little weight to his famous meeting with Freud, one can be in no doubt of the necessity he felt to incorporate "banal" material in his symphonies (not just fanfares—Mitchell stresses that the first movement of the Third Symphony is all march-motifs—but *ländler*, folksongs and even the most dubious kind of "celestial" harmonies—*e.g.* after the great climax in the slow movement of the Fourth Symphony). But the banal is precisely Freud's "*Alltagsleben*" and has to be changed in the labyrinths of Mahler's imagination into the sublime. I suspect that the reason modern audiences are so at home with Mahler is that they recognise that he, like them, can trust no absolutes—at least, none capable of being plucked out of the air. His music is full of the everyday, the things which happen to all of us, but it is also transcendental. The "solutions" which advanced art has lighted upon have never convinced the public. Mahler, who prophesied that his time would come, has been proved correct. He was, perhaps, the last composer to be fully human, without benefit of history or hagiography. He stands in opposition not only to his supposed successor Schoenberg, but to all proposals, from the Maoist to the Nihilist, which reduce the dignity of the human imagination—even if they do it in the name of the people or the future.

Holbrook is at his best on this ground: he is least interested in Mahler's Eighth Symphony, that compound of medievalism and Goethe's super-smooth mysticism, remarking, absolutely truly, that Mahler's heart was not in received religion. What Holbrook calls Mahler's existential reaction must have been felt by any listener who has got to know his music well. There is probably no vocabulary to describe the Ninth and Tenth Symphonies and *Das Lied von der Erde* but the psychoanalytic one employed by Holbrook, yet anyone may feel what Mahler is doing. The "wanderer" motif, inherited from Schubert, becomes the quest or pilgrimage; changes are rung on the truthful and painful material of our early life, both by techniques of variation and by layered or contrapuntal adaptation. And so on—it is much easier to appreciate than to describe.

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Holbrook's discussion of the third movement of Mahler's Ninth is especially to be recommended here. The way this rondo burlesque calms itself out of its own turmoil with the unwinding trumpet tune is given a brilliant exposition by Holbrook. Of course, there is no final triumph—Mahler had to die, and we, listening to his music, can only rejoice in its appropriateness to our desire for transcendence and our equally true recognition that the progress of the music has been a double one—from crippling innocence to absolving knowledge. Death is the clue; the music is there to make the bridge.

Meanwhile the world has moved in on the composer and his legacy. David Holbrook is ready with interpretation: Donald Mitchell with vast apparatus of time, place and action: Bruno Walter, the friend and disciple, recalls the heroic dimensions in which Mahler made his art real. My only worry is the growing library of words which is building up round Mahler. He is a composer dangerously well-suited to exegesis. Something in human nature seems to want to take over an artist of such complexity—and writing on Mahler has all the possessiveness of a love affair. Fortunately, concerts and recordings are so frequent these days that any one gospel of illumination comes under constant challenge from the original.

HOLBROOK'S STUDY BELONGS, with his poems, to the smaller and more human part of his polemical output. Those who have trembled at the thought of the Black Paper side of his writing, of all those letters-to-the-editor, may be assured that *Gustav Mahler—And The Courage To Be* is very different. It is sane, original and well-argued. There is only one real snag for the ordinary reader—Holbrook's chosen jargon from psychoanalysis. This is a mish-mash of Kleinian terms, with existential trimmings. But if one can bear such phrases as "false male doing" the rewards are great.

The second part of the book is a highly technical (musically technical, that is) analysis of the Ninth Symphony, an analysis which seems to me completely convincing. But it is the individual insights throughout Holbrook's closely argued chapters which remain with one at the end. After demonstrating that the First Movement of Mahler's Ninth begins with a rhythm of heartbeat (a rhythmn traceable as far back as *Das klagende Lied* and the *Fahrenden Gesellen* cycle of songs), Holbrook expounds its main "fate" theme as

> a threat of death and dissolution that seems at first to come from the world "out there"—but is gradually, and by immense effort of resolution found to be "within", part of oneself and an ineradicable element of one's humanness.

The First Movement ends in a victory which is not complete. As Holbrook puts it, "the middle two movements exert 'destructive criticism' . . . on any security gained by the music of the First Movement." The disquiet of the Second Movement he calls "manic depressive", which the Third Movement extends towards the "schizoid." He goes on, "yet, the movement overcomes disintegration by the magnificent logic of its construction in *fugato* style." Just as the Third Symphony's last movement (another enormous adagio) is dominated by appoggiature, so the last movement of the Ninth is haunted by the "turn" in its main tune. This "turn" can be traced back through all Mahler's earlier music: it is as all-pervasive in his work as it is in Wagner's. I think Holbrook misreads this last movement of the Ninth somewhat. Observing that the symphony's tonality sinks from D to D Flat, he remarks that this is the composer dying and accepting his mortality. But there was the Tenth Symphony to come, and its ending is altogether different. When Mahler really was dying, his music became a new and agonising affirmation of life.

Nor do I agree with Holbrook that Mahler's urge was to escape from Envy (time) by escaping from tonality into a vision of Eternity. I can find nowhere in his music any escape from tonality—not even in his Chinese or Eastern works (the "*ewig, ewig*" ending of *Das Lied* has some pretty firm C Major in it). But these are small disagreements. Holbook's progress through the Ninth Symphony is always illuminating—though it's wise to keep playing the symphony to yourself at intervals to let your ears check what your eyes are taking in. It is one of the most exhaustive examinations of any single masterpiece ever produced, and its two techniques—psychoanalysis and musical annotation—are deployed by Holbrook with great address.

WE HAVE HAD TO WAIT a long time for the second volume of Donald Mitchell's definitive study of Mahler's music. Even now, with these 450 pages of annotation before us, we have not progressed beyond the Fourth Symphony. The general public should note that Mitchell's book, though extremely readable and well-written, bristles with technical detail and is a work of unalloyed scholarship. Much of it will appeal only to the Mahler specialist. Calling his volume *The Wunderhorn Years*, Mitchell examines the provenance, genesis and interrelationship of the first four symphonies, the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, the *Knaben Wunderhorn* settings, some in their peregrinations from piano-accompanied to orchestral-accompanied songs, and, above all, the way these remarkably personal lieder underlie all Mahler's orchestral works of

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the period. It is an impossibly complex set of relationships, and the reader almost gets vertigo following Mitchell into the labyrinth of material which must be investigated if he is to comprehend just how the First and Second Symphonies came to assume the form we know them in today.

A reviewer would need as many words as Mitchell uses to begin to comment on this prodigious scholarship. (And he might well be tired out from trying to keep up with the equally exhaustive scholarship of Mr de la Grange's biography of Mahler. Then there are Jack Diether and a score of American commentators. Mahler studies are becoming as prolix as the early fathers of the church.) Also, Mitchell makes the passage harder for the reader, since he put this book together rather than planned it—many of the pieces are reprinted from articles. The effect is both haphazard and repetitive. But there are some extremely important insights. Mitchell points out that by the time Mahler came to write the middle-period symphonies (and this is foreshadowed as early as the First),

> the old relationship has essentially changed: the songs are no longer prime sources for the symphonies, but, on the contrary, derive their unique characteristics from the nature and processes of Mahler's symphonic art.

A hearing of *Revelge* and *Der Tamboursg'sell* proves this immediately.

Another of his clarifying ideas is his linking of Mahler's early symphonic music with the Lisztian/Berliozian symphonic poem, a point smudged by most commentators who reflect Mahler's own later dislike for any programmes attached to his symphonies. The fact that they stand up well without programmes (and that Mahler anyway kept changing the programmes) does not alter their mode of composition. The programmes were like scaffolding—they were needed in the building, though Mahler cleared them away when the works were finished. Mitchell stresses the importance of Mahler's setting of *Das himmlische Leben*, as a sort of "*ur-Lied*" for the early symphonies. Melodic fragments of the song are in the Third Symphony, and, of course, the song itself is the finale of the Fourth Symphony. But its creative influence is everywhere, since so many of the Wunderhorn settings seem to take their tone from this song.

There are dozens of other points of interest in Mitchell's book—a few are listed here. There may

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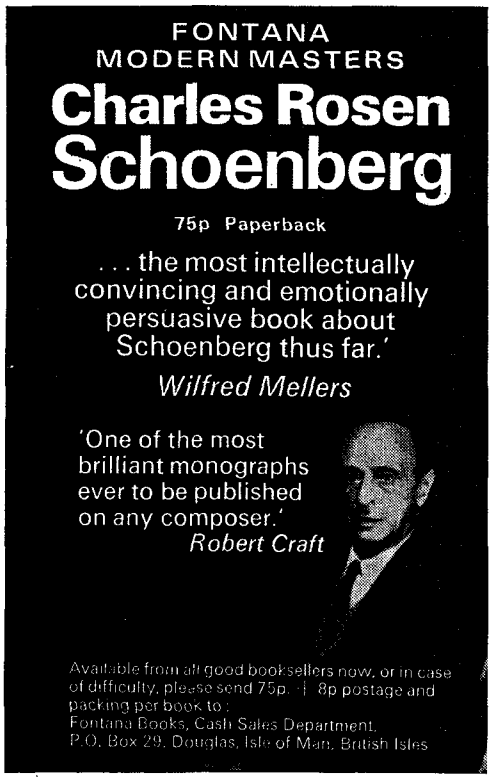
be four symphonies which precede No 1, and if they do exist, they were most likely destroyed in Dresden during the war. Strauss's *Don Juan* and Mahler's First Symphony had their premières within a few days of each other in 1889—the one in Weimar, the other in Budapest. The picture of the Huntsman's Funeral, which lies behind the third movement of the First Symphony (though Mahler also tagged the music as being after Callot), is most probably the well-known one by Moritz von Schwind, Schubert's youthful friend. It is the best known of the many Austrian treatments of such themes. Another of Schwind's woodcuts treats the devil as fiddle-player, Freund Hein, and, of course, the epigraph to the second movement of the Fourth Symphony, with its tuned-up solo violin, is "*Freund Hein spielt auf.*" Mitchell also remarks on something which I had noticed myself—the origin of the specially sardonic treatment of the funeral march in the First Symphony must be the tiny comic masterpiece Mendelssohn wrote for the mock funeral in the Pyramus and Thisbe episode of *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

Mitchell's book teems with interesting points: Mahler's characteristic fondness for the E Flat clarinet, the Fourth Symphony's reasonable claim to be the first work of neo-classicism in music. It is clearly an indispensable volume, and should be in the library of anyone who cares about Mahler seriously.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BRUNO WALTER'S MEMORIES of Mahler are reprinted from the original edition of the thirties. They are, alas, not very interesting or illuminating. Walter belonged to a generation almost breathless with imprecision, and his account of Mahler in Hamburg and Vienna, and his presentation of the great works of the composer's maturity give one no further insight into Mahler or his artistic personality. But that is only Walter the writer. Fortunately, we have recordings of Walter the conductor—and there the situation is utterly different. I have never heard any performances of Mahler to touch his—and I have persevered with all the new and admired concert and recorded performances of the past thirty years. His First, Second, Fourth, Fifth and Ninth Symphonies are simply the best Mahler you can hear. I have on my shelves Mahler's music conducted by Horenstein, Solti, Klemperer, Mengelberg, Szell, Barbirolli, Haitink—to name only those who set the critics raving with delight. So superb is Walter's version of Symphony No 2 I've never bothered to buy another version. And his pre-war No 9 and post-war *Das Lied von der Erde,* with the Vienna Philharmonic, have no equals. I suggest that anyone thinking of laying out £3.75 for Walter's little book buy the CBS low-price album of the Second Symphony instead. It is an absolutely authentic Mahler recording.

IS MAHLER OVER-VALUED and over-exposed? I have spoken to intelligent and humane music-lovers who still wince at what they consider his indecent self-revelation. To me he seems a wonderfully classic artist—though not, perhaps, in the way that Stravinsky is. I sometimes find myself comparing him with Richard Strauss, the composer he recognised as his most talented colleague and rival. Ten years ago I should have placed him well above Strauss. I would still do so, if aspiration and nobility of mind were the only criteria. And, marvellous orchestrator as Strauss is, he must defer to Mahler for absolute perfection of ear—one bar of Mahler, one chord even, takes you into an utterly individual sound-world. Yet, in the end, I think Strauss had the greater creativity. Mahler performed miracles of metamorphosis with the "banality" of his obsessive material. Strauss made *his* great works out of material not so much banal as vulgar. In the end, vulgarity is an essential ingredient in great music. I doubt that Mahler was ever quite vulgar enough.

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Unfamiliar Sounds

Early Music—By DAVID FALLOWS

LUCID WRITING about music of the standard orchestral repertory is relatively rare, probably because music remains the least representative of the arts and can therefore be described only with considerable difficulty. But the writer at least has the comfort of knowing that he can expect his reader to have some familiarity with a largish selection of 19th-century music, that this will, by and large, be generally accepted as the music most worthy of serious discussion, and sufficiently representative to permit description of the unknown in terms of the known.

The writer about renaissance music, on the other hand, faces far more serious problems. Very few of his readers can be assumed to have a comparably thorough knowledge of more than a handful of renaissance pieces. The pieces they do know are often those chosen for inclusion in concert programmes on the basis of their suitability to the performers or the instruments at hand, or of forming an attractive contrast with the preceding and following pieces; they would relatively rarely have been chosen by a historian as particularly significant or aesthetically valuable. Perhaps most important, a piece can vary so much in different performances as to make familiarity with the work in many cases of little help when reading an historical exegesis.

This is partly because the ear apparently latches on to tone-colour far more easily than to many other features, and the revival of early music that has grown so enormously over recent years tended in its earlier stages to generate interest largely because of the arcane and curious instruments used. George Bernard Shaw's famous early reviews of Dolmetsch concerts say far more about the instruments than about the music, and it is probably true that the growing success of the New York Pro Musica in the 1950s and 1960s, as of the Early Music Consort of London and Musica Reservata in the past decade, was founded very much on their richness and originality of tone-colour while they often performed music that has still only rarely attracted the interest of the music historian. That is not to say that these groups ignored the great mass cycles and motets with which renaissance composers seem to have established the greater part of their reputations in their own time. These pieces are being performed, not only in the concert hall but in many of our major cathedrals as well; but it is still the case that many of the Josquin masses and practically all those of Palestrina, Lassus and Vittoria remain unrecorded while reams of little dances that are scarcely mentioned in most historical studies come almost monthly from the recording companies.

So it is a great pleasure to welcome the new anthology by the late Noah Greenberg, finished and prepared for publication by his former New York Pro Musica colleague Paul Maynard.[1] Its 41 pieces are all taken from the Pro Musica repertory, and each is given an introduction of 500 words or so filling in its historical position and describing the music on the basis of the experience of so many performances; and since practically no renaissance music has any specific instrumentation, suggestions are added at the end of each introduction. Anyone who has a few records of early music will find some familiar pieces in the anthology and, more important, he will also find crisp and perceptive explanations of pieces that are not discussed in the larger studies.

AT THE OTHER END OF THE SCALE is Dr Eleanor Selfridge-Field's fascinating book about baroque instrumental music in Venice[2]: after introductory chapters that contain a wealth of new documentary and biographical material on Venetian musicians, pleasantly explained with an absorbing number of stimulating historical insights, she provides a blow-by-blow history of Venetian instrumental music between 1550 and 1750. The sound of the later half of this repertory is of course familiar: in the guise of "wallpaper music" it is known from countless informal parties and genteel pubs. But the number of specific pieces known today is relatively small; so Dr Selfridge-Field devotes space in her book to Monteverdi (who wrote no instrumental music as such) and to Corelli (who was not Venetian), and gives more room than one might

[1] *An Anthology of Early Renaissance Music.* Edited by NOAH GREENBERG and PAUL MAYNARD. Dent, £9.95.

[2] *Venetian Instrumental Music from Gabrieli to Vivaldi.* By ELEANOR SELFRIDGE-FIELD. Basil Blackwell, £10.

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The Life Story of Lee Collins as told to Mary Collins

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expect to Vivaldi's *Seasons* and to A. Marcello's D minor oboe concerto. Making use of such handholds she manages to build a remarkably clear account of the composers and their music. It is an excellent work of scholarship and should remain useful for many years.

I CANNOT FEEL so confident, however, about Isabelle Cazeaux's book in the same series[3]: it is a history of French renaissance music built in social terms, with considerably more accent on the circumstances and the background than on the music itself. That is all very well in its way, and there may be a considerable market for it to judge by the number of publishers who mention it as a potential book-subject as soon as the subject of renaissance music is raised. But this is entirely the wrong moment in the history of musicology for such a study. All through the 19th century and indeed up to about 20 years ago histories of early music were written in this way, merely because so few modern transcriptions were available that nobody could possibly have anything approaching a comprehensive grasp of the repertory, but the past 30 years have seen an enormous burst of modern editions, particularly in the gigantic series of complete editions of 15th- and 16th-century composers being issued by the American Institute of Musicology. The amount of music in modern edition that the responsible student of renaissance music will need to get to know is quite daunting; but start one must, and in such circumstances Professor Cazeaux's book—informative and useful though it is—seems a frightening abnegation of responsibility in favour of techniques that are fashionable, for entirely different reasons, in other disciplines.

ON THE OTHER HAND the reader who was drawn to her book by an interest in concerts of early music will not find it irrelevant, for all her social detail helps very much to put the music into some kind of wider context, whereas the reader of Howard Mayer Brown's new book, *Music in the Renaissance*,[4] may well find it an extreme case of the fundamental paradox from which I began: the scholar is interested in one set of pieces, the crumhorn player in another. Professor Brown, whose comprehensive catalogue of *Printed Instrumental Music before 1600* (1967) not only set entirely new standards of documentation in the area but placed every player of early

[3] *French Music in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*. By ISABELLE CAZEAUX. Basil Blackwell, £10.

[4] *Music in the Renaissance*. By HOWARD MAYER BROWN. Prentice-Hall, Prentice-Hall History of Music Series, £7.65, $10.95; paper £5.55, $7.95.

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instrumental music permanently in his debt, devotes a mere 14 pages to instrumental music in his new survey of nearly 400 pages. His reasons emerge clearly enough: a book of this kind must be selective; it must try to guide the reader to what, so far as we can tell, seemed important to the musicians of the 16th century, and to explain why this was the case. Professor Brown has in fact faced up to the challenge of all those new editions: he has read them carefully and he constantly directs his reader to them. Biographical information is kept to a minimum and there is a consistently readable attempt to describe the music and to identify the characteristics of the various composers. As the final volume in a series designed primarily as American college textbooks it must have been extremely difficult to write—any major study of renaissance music cowers in the shadow of Gustave Reese's massive 20-year-old volume—but the stern selectivity and clarity of his approach make the book a signal success. It will certainly become standard reading on the Renaissance for all music students who can read English.

Perhaps the most debatable aspect of Brown's book is the "great man" dogma that underlies its whole organisation. Very few anonymous works are discussed and the index contains only proper names. But the virtue of this approach is that it brings Brown to write about subjects he might not otherwise have chosen: Adrian Willaert is a case in point. Every contemporary account assures us that he was one of the major composers of the 16th century and the true father of the Venetian school, but his music has always seemed singularly uninteresting, muddy and overblown to most commentators in this century, so many have quietly passed over him (Dr Selfridge-Field gave him seven lines) and the bold ones have spoken out and voiced their feeling that his music was relatively poor. Professor Brown takes the contemporary commentators at their face value, is determined to find the music's quality, and writes a fascinating section on Willaert's music. It is difficult to tell how much he really believes what he is writing here, but if he brings musicians to perform the music more often and more intelligently there is a chance that Willaert will one day regain the popularity he had in the 16th century.

PAUL DOE'S NEWLY REVISED BOOK on Thomas Tallis[5] is welcome in the same way: there is not much discussion of the music around Tallis, but in 60-odd pages with a generous larding of music

[5] *Tallis*. By PAUL DOE. 2nd revised edition. Oxford University Press, "Oxford Studies of Composers (4)", £2.20.

For the first time—a book devoted to all the songs from the singer's viewpoint

Schubert

A Biographical Study of his Songs

by DIETRICH FISCHER-DIESKAU

translated by Kenneth Whitton

No one is better qualified to write a book on all the songs of Schubert than Fischer-Dieskau, who has recorded and sung in concert nearly all of the 608 songs Schubert wrote. Here he sets the songs against the background of Schubert's life with his friends in Vienna – some of whose poems he set to music – and, through detailed discussion of the song-cycles, shows the part the songs played in the composer's life, and their relevance to the age he lived in.

304 pages £5.95

CASSELL

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examples he gives a neat picture of the music adding liturgical and social information where necessary. The only heavy revision in the new edition is in the chapter on Tallis's English church music, perceptively rewritten on the basis of Doe's recent work re-editing two volumes in the *Early English Church Music* series. Other results of recent scholarship are incorporated in the text as well as in the newly laid-out and much clearer list of works at the end of the volume.

DAVID MUNROW'S DEATH still seems appallingly recent and it may be some time before the world of early music recovers from the shock. His consummate virtuosity and inexhaustible energy earned him the unreserved respect of musicians throughout the profession and all over the world as he performed with them (no fewer than five sets of Brandenburg concertos have him as recorder soloist) and conducted them (largely in film scores, though there is little doubt that he would have been conducting Brahms before long); and his irresistible wit and clarity as a speaker, particularly as a broadcaster, allowed him to bring his work to an enormous audience. In many ways he was less an innovator than a wonderful exponent of a received tradition: the 23 records he made with his Early Music Consort of London (nine more are due to be released shortly) continue the lead inherited from the Brussels Pro Musica Antiqua and the New York Pro Musica. His genius lay in his ability to communicate to his fellow musicians and to his audience, whether through the medium of a wind instrument or simply as a speaker. His own attitude to the book he has written is explained in the preface:

> In ten years of giving concerts of early music there is one question which I have been asked with predictable regularity: please will you explain the instruments? This book is a response to the hundreds of people who have asked me that question and to my own gradual awareness that I was certain of very few of the answers. For me, writing the book has been the same sort of process of discovery that I hope it will be for those who read it.

Instruments of the Middle Ages and Renaissance[6] is well-documented, extensively researched, plentifully illustrated, and filled with the insights of Munrow's experience as a player and as a friend of various folk musicians, particularly in South America; but most of all it is lucid and extremely pleasant to read. Its 96 pages in four-column record-jacket format include much new information, especially in the sections on plucked strings and on wind instruments in the Renaissance; and the two-record set issued by EMI dramatically illustrates the points made in the book while at the same time preserving some vintage Munrow performances.

Many of those involved in early music, whether as performers or listeners, came to it in the first place partly because of the strange and rare instrumental sounds; but continued interest thrives on something entirely different. As David Munrow implies, here is an enormous repertory of serious music of a very high quality which is still not being performed as well as it is possible to perform it. New recordings of the classical and romantic repertories can in most cases improve on their predecessors only in matters of detail, whereas the performer of early music is even today constantly fighting technical incompetence, musical ineptness and musicological ignorance.

The world of early music has so much room for improvement on so many fronts that large numbers of excellent musicians continue to play for what are still relatively small financial rewards (in comparison to opera singing or

[6] *Instruments of the Middle Ages and Renaissance*. By DAVID MUNROW. Oxford University Press, £3.95; or together with a two-record set illustrating the book, with David Munrow directing the Early Music Consort of London, EMI SLS 988, £7.95.

VORKUTA

In 1947 Edward Buca, an 18-year-old Pole, was sent to the Vorkuta complex of Soviet labour camps 90 miles inside the Arctic Circle, to serve 20 years' hard labour. In 1953 Buca instigated a

VORKUTA

general strike to improve the prisoners' conditions, during which 400 were gunned down. Buca's shocking account of life in Vorkuta will be published on 19 July by Constable at £5.95, illustrated

VORKUTA

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orchestral conducting, for instance), because there is a serious and taxing challenge promising musical rewards that are far greater in the sense of helping other musicians to see the essence of the music. David Munrow rose to the challenges with his inimitable ebullience and driving energy, contributing much to the improvement of standards in many ways; but there is still far to go, and there is still enormous scope for adventurous and resourceful musicians—just as there is an enormous quantity of material for the adventurous and resourceful listener.

Inventing Realities

On Schoenberg & Wagner—By WILFRID MELLERS

"TO BE WISE", said Goethe, "man must not cease to hearken to the involuntary promptings of his nature, and yet by ordering them must guide their direction and so bring to realisation the inherent form of his being." Such a remark stands in direct succession to the dynamic mode of thinking and the morphological approach to culture adumbrated by Vico and broadcast by Herder. Kant had defined an organic structure as one in which "every part is reciprocally means and end"; Schlegel distinguished mechanic form which is pre-determined from organic form which is innate and "develops itself from within." In this sense the laws of nature and of the human spirit become identical; and in our own day Victor Zuckerkandl can claim, in his great book *Sound and Symbol* (1973), that the temporal aspect of music makes "a law governing life" audible. A piece of (good) music is a "meaningful entity of tones" because its deep structure is organic in the exact biological sense of the term.

> To hear a composition is therefore directly to perceive organic structure. . . . Something is done, something is made; and this doing consists in thinking. This thinking is not that of a man who acts, this doing is not that of a man who thinks. Doing and thinking are wholly fused into one: not existence on the one hand and thinking about it on the other, but a thinking that by itself creates existence.
>
> It follows that the closest analogy to the functioning of a musical composition is the functioning of a human life. We act as we do because we are what we are. We become what we are because we act as we do. The process is one of gradual progression from amorphous beginnings to ever more sharply defined forms, and is complete only when the last step is taken. . . . Musicality is thus not an individual gift but one of man's basic attributes. In music man does not give expression to something (his feelings), nor does he create autonomous structures: *he invents himself*. The law by which he knows himself to be alive is realised in its purest form.

While such speculations are dubiously pertinent to the whole range of man's experience, they are valid in reference to music from Goethe's time onwards, and especially to Goethe's greatest contemporary, Beethoven. Wagner regarded himself, in some ways justly, as Beethoven's successor; and Schoenberg inherited much from both Wagner and Beethoven. The current spate of books on Wagner and Schoenberg certainly encourages exploration of the relationship between "life" and "organic form": for it would seem that these men didn't merely create music out of the interlocked stresses that made them act psychologically as they did and be what they were, but rather that the forms their art attained were the revelation of their nature and fate. With supreme self-confidence Wagner "invented himself" in what he called the (not a) Modern Myth; thought of himself as "standing for" humanity, as Christ had done in bygone times; and could say that the building of Bayreuth, through the agency of a young, mad king, fulfilled the destiny he had planned for himself and humanity! His Modern Myth tells us that perfect love is the Self made whole; and reaffirms the nobility of man's aspiration, even though such love can be realised only in nirvana. The long-range forms in which Wagner incarnates this discovery dispense with the public conventions of aria or dance, eschew the solidarity of jolly fugato. Most external symbols of the things that make humanism workable have vanished; yet if one feels claustrophobia in submitting so utterly to Wagner's consciousness, one has no choice in the matter. One submits to the inexorability of Wagner's self-creation. What he has made is not to be argued with; it's a law of life, wherein the occurences that Wagner experienced as a man have become organic form.

OF FOUR RECENT BOOKS on Wagner only Hans Gal's claims to be a critical study of the man and music.[1] Its fascination and its originality lie in the

[1] *Wagner*. By HANS GAL. Translated by HANS-HUBERT SCHONZELER. Gollancz, £5.50.

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fact that it cuts Wagner down to (merely human) size; compared with Wagner's own verbal lucubrations and his musical compositions it is brief, and almost laconically astringent. Its basic thesis is that Wagner's genius—for all his hatred of orthodox operatic conventions—was none the less that of an opera composer; his command of musical forms was inseparable from their realisation in theatrical effect. There's a faintly debunking overtone to this because theatre is of its nature illusory; the suggestion, never overtly stated, is that Wagner offers not the archetypal Destiny of Modern Man, but a dream that contains a hint of cheat. If this impression remains when one has finished and reflected on the book, it doesn't necessarily work to Wagner's discredit. Gal has no doubt that Wagner's genius, functioning at white heat, is transcendent, and though its transcendence is also illusion that's what the operas are about. After *The Flying Dutchman*, wherein Wagner discovered his essential theme, the myth that his operas make manifest is precisely the illusions by which we must have the courage to live. The lies of Wagner's life would be monstrous but for the music, in which they become tragic and sublime. They're also ridiculous, of course; and that Wagner doesn't *in his music* admit to this is what makes him, for all his grandeur, a lesser man than Beethoven. Through his music Beethoven learned to live without illusion and with a veracity simultaneously sublime and ridiculous, tragic and grotesque. Wagner learned to believe in illusion sufficiently to die in or even for it: as Gal's coolly committed account of his life makes clear.

Physically a small man, Wagner's manic ego must make him a Caesar, a conqueror of women. His lust for life encourages a lust for possessions, purchased with other people's money, and righteously so since the world owed him what he needed and, given the intensity of his creative impulse, he needed much or all. Anything that thwarted, or threatened to thwart, his ambition was an agent of the devil; the Jews could act as scapegoat since Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer were successful composers who served an Establishment rather than the new prophet. Though Wagner, if certainly sensual, was far from being *l'homme moyen sensuel*, one might say that his delusions of grandeur were those of most of us, writ very large; and that his genius lay in the fact that, unlike us, he fulfilled them in his art. Perhaps his ultimate achievement was that, in fulfilling them, he came to recognise their illusory nature. His gods are men, or Man as he

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RAVEL
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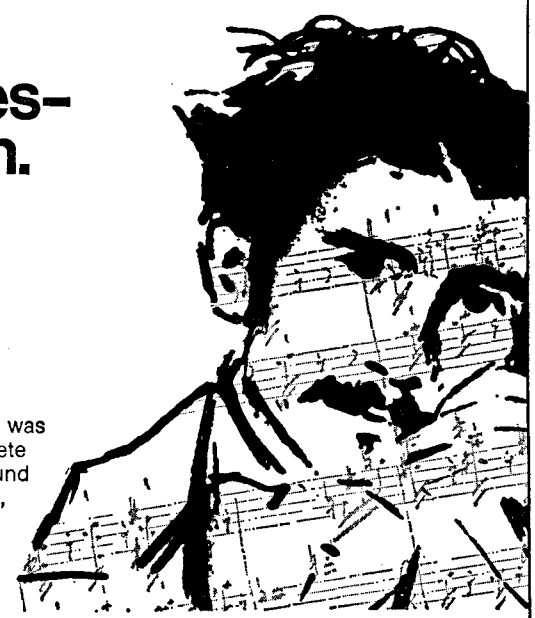

The research for this brilliant centenary biography was so thorough that the author turned up nine complete Ravel compositions thought to be lost. He also found many unpublished letters, sketches and fragments, and interviewed dozens of Ravel's colleagues and acquaintances. The result is a rich, intimate portrait of an artist whose work continues to dominate the concert stage, but whose personal life and aesthetic principles have been, up to now, shrouded in mystery.
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might be if we were all as bold or brash as Wagner; yet *The Ring* concludes with the man-god's twilight. Valhalla perishes in the purgatorial fire and—like the Wagnerian sequence—returns to its source, to be renewed in the unconscious waters.

THE OTHER THREE WAGNER BOOKS foster the legend, and therefore the illusion. The most valuable is the "documentary study",[2] a sumptuous picture-book incorporating biographical commentaries from Wagner himself, and from lovers, friends, enemies and acquaintances. The myth that was Wagner's life complements with astonishing accuracy the myth embodied in his art, which was that of a revolutionary who "thought" in tones and theatrical action rather than in his copiously fuddled words. He lived to see his myth become apparent fact at Bayreuth, where the Festival Theatre was supposed to provide for his time and place what the Greek amphitheatre had provided for classical antiquity: a playhouse that was also a temple, wherein was celebrated the god of the deified Self. The pictures in this book, superbly reproduced, vividly evoke the people, flora and fauna of the Wagner legend, and of the dream-world of his operas. The editors have selected the textual matter with high intelligence, every item being in some way revelatory. Wagner is perceptive, even witty, about himself in youth, and remarkably aware in his analysis of his relationship to Beethoven; letters from Berlioz or Baudelaire move one in much the same way as do Renoir's portraits of the ageing Wagner, wherein one sensualist poignantly depicts another. Intermittently, Wagner's calligraphy is a delight; Pierre Boulez's preface opens vistas, as a preface to a book on Wagner should.

But Wagner also lived to see the dream shattered: his temple, drained of religious import, became the prerogative of a parasitic leisured class, who prepared the way for Hitler's misappropriation of it. This transition is covered by the photographs that comprise the *Wagner Family Album*,[3] which is a book for acolytes, though any Wagner-lover will find some of the pictures enthralling. It's half comic, half melancholy, to follow the process whereby Wagner's dream-temple becomes high-culture

[2] *Wagner: A Documentary Study*. Edited by HERBERT BARTH, DIETRICH MACK and EGON VOSS. Thames and Hudson, £12.

[3] *The Wagner Family Albums, Bayreuth 1876–1976*. By WOLF SIEGFRIED WAGNER. Thames and Hudson, £5.95.

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(Butlin's) camp for the affluent. This is not to denigrate the Bayreuth Festival as it now is, for it *has* to be "cultural", and a "Festival", with both words in inverted commas, because Wagner's hope that Bayreuth might be a "people's theatre" and a meeting-place for a religious rite was always delusory. Geoffrey Skelton's book—first published in 1965 and now reissued with additional material[4]—soberly charts Wagner's initial conception and its realisation, which is also a betrayal, over the past hundred years. This too is a book for initiates, though again there are some pictures of recent Bayreuth productions which will impress anyone who cares about Wagner—or for that matter art or "life."

WAGNER, EPIPHANISING the self, would have liked to obliterate history, and was condescending towards most music of the past (as well as contemptuous of all present music except his own). So a reason for his hatred of the Jews deeper than mere envy of their commercial prosperity may have been that, as against the oriental conception of Time as cyclic, the Semitic way was a progress through history; which implies a sense of the past. As Owen Barfield has put it:

> only after the Greeks had polarised creation into consciousness on the one side and phenomena, or appearances, on the other, was memory possible, and it is through memory that man develops. The position of the Jews in history is comparable with the position occupied by memory in the individual man.

Paradoxically, Schoenberg, ultimate post-Wagnerian composer of European consciousness, is also a composer of history, retracing the racial memory.

Charles Rosen's little book[5] follows this process through Schoenberg's creative life. In the early years Schoenberg—identified with the Woman of *Erwartung* and the lunar Pierrot—uncravenly accepts disintegration both within society and within the psyche, and seeks to heal the breach between flesh and spirit created by post-Renaissance man's obsession with materiality. (Rosen's account of how "free" chromatic music functions is deeply revealing). In his second phase Schoenberg attempts a correlation between total chromatic expressionism, now serially organised, and the past as represented by classical structures such as binary dance form or ternary aria. In his third phase, however, Schoenberg assays something more radical, absorbing the Wagnerian yearning for illusion into a "mystical" resolution comparable with the organic forms of late Beethoven. His string trio—composed after an illness during which he had literally if momently died—is the same kind of experience as Beethoven's late quartets, with the difference that Schoenberg fails to enter Beethoven's Paradise Regained. It's significant that in his unfinished opera *Moses und Aaron* Schoenberg saw his personal vision within the context of the history of his race. This consummatory work stands in the same relation to his serial period as the (also unfinished) oratorio *Die Jacobsleiter* stands to his free chromatic phase. The crisis within the inner life is now seen as an historical crisis also; in both the musical technique and the philosophical statement are identified. The Jewish race, springing from the Orient, made possible Christian humanism: which finally explodes in *Tristan*, *Parsifal* and *Götterdämmerung*. Schoenberg, as Wagner's successor, reinstates Jewish consciousness and the duality of spirit and flesh—to the denial or evasion of which Wagner had dedicated his creative life.

Wagner was a lesser composer than Beethoven because his greatness was an apotheosis of illusion rather than of truth. Schoenberg was a lesser composer than Wagner because he couldn't approach Wagner's however illusory transcendence. He was also, of course, a lesser composer than Beethoven because he could not enter, though he glimpsed, Beethoven's Promised Land. None the less Schoenberg's greatness is formidable, whether or no one "likes" his music; and is so because he did reinstate truth, however painful and partial. Malcolm MacDonald's admirable Master Musicians book[6] has the basic merit of stressing the human reality of Schoenberg's music, its relevance to the world which he lived in and we have inherited: and of relegating his technical discoveries to the status of means rather than ends. Though the book doesn't illuminate, as Rosen's does, it conveys enthusiasm for and delight in the music; this is rare in a book on Schoenberg and essential to one purporting to introduce him to a wide public. Occasionally MacDonald's popularising energy misleads. Schoenberg's truth, as Jew and Modern Man, is of its nature agonised, and it doesn't serve his cause to harp too celestially on his music's beauty. Pain *may* be beautiful, and a score such as *Erwartung* is indeed a ravishing sensuous enchantment. But it's going a bit far to refer, within six lines, to the Third Quartet as poised, serene, classical, optimistic, charming, and as "characterised by unfailing melodiousness and lyric grace." That's not how it sounds to me,

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[4] *Wagner at Bayreuth*. By GEOFFREY SKELTON. White Lion, £5.75.

[5] *Schoenberg*. By CHARLES ROSEN. Marion Boyars, £4.25; Fontana Modern Masters, 75p.

[6] *Schoenberg*. By MALCOLM MACDONALD. Dent, Master Musicians series, £3.95.

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after all these years; nor can I swallow MacDonald's frequent references to Schoenberg's exquisite sense of humour. A sardonic pungency or wry wit, maybe, but little that I'd call humour; and the point matters since Schoenberg's lack (as it seems to me) of the comic sense differentiates him, as it differentiates Wagner, from Beethoven. In teetering on the abyss Beethoven was, like King Lear, counterpointed by joy and an awareness of the absurd. Beethoven, a daemonic Jove, suffered, and laughed; Schoenberg suffered. Since in a sense he suffered for us that's something to be grateful for; and MacDonald seems to me dead on the mark when in his final paragraph he admits that Schoenberg's shadow is "sometimes oppressive", but adds that

> to wish he had never been born is like wanting a return to the womb. Given the kind of place the world is, it may be natural, even rational, that we should sometimes wish we had never been born. But we have only fully grown up when we have experienced that wish, and come to terms with its utter futility.

THE TWO BOOKS by Schoenberg are reissues, and both demonstrate the revolutionary composer's conservatism and sense of the past; "my music is not modern", he once said, "it is merely badly played." The harmony textbook,[7] written for his Los Angeles students, is based mainly on the work of the European masters—Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms and Wagner—whom Schoenberg regarded as his own teachers; no textbook covers that traditional field more economically or more expertly. *Style and Idea*[8] collates Schoenberg's miscellaneous essays on music, mostly written in his own slightly tortured but idiosyncratically animated English. Re-read today it seems even more distinguished than it did on its first appearance in 1950; respect for the past stimulates rather than stifles the acuity of Schoenberg's response to immediate musical (and social) developments. In this respect the essay on Brahms the Progressive remains as crucial, and as masterly, as the famous disquisition on his own musical evolution, to which he gave the pertinent and poetic title "How to be Lonely." This new edition contains some new material, mostly fragmentary sketches, obituary notices or brief manifestos. The whole is edited with exemplary devotion, is printed with impeccable lucidity, and produced with supreme elegance. So it ought to be, given the price: which

[7] *Structural Functions of Harmony*. By ARNOLD SCHOENBERG. Edited by LEONARD STEIN. Ernest Benn, £2.95.

[8] *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*. Edited by LEONARD STEIN. Faber & Faber, £17.50.

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is considerably higher than that of the documentary study of Wagner. At £12 the latter is a bargain; of Wagnerian opulence, it must have cost a Wagnerian fortune to produce.

Cradles of Cold Clay

Recent Poetry—By DOUGLAS DUNN

ALTHOUGH I FIND MYSELF unable to say much about George Barker's poems[1] that will please his admirers, there is one dimension of his work that I do enjoy. When he writes,

For early in the morning when the dew hangs from the railings
and the sun walks up from the bedrooms of the sea
we step out of our dreams having bathed in such waters
that we rise up like the dayspring as clear as can be

I find the innocence of the expressions, and their slowly jaunting rhythms, beyond criticism. Yet in the verse which follows that, in the seventh of the "Dialogues of Gog and Magog", phrases such as "mirrors of seeming", "doors of nightmare" and "madhouse of heaven" are certainly resistible. Their idiom is simply not that of the earlier four lines, even if "dayspring" is a piece of asocial poeticising. Phrases such as these represent nothing other than poetic superfluity. In attempting to suggest a mysterious Nowhere beyond understanding—except in the understanding of poetry itself—Barker provides us with a mere phraseology. To accept it you need a greater faith in poetry as an intermediary between society and the unspecifiably mysterious than most readers would admit to possessing in their lives, except, that is, when reading poetry they suddenly think they have it after all. That faith does, I feel, recognise poetry as an art more spiritual than cultural.

Just how Gog and Magog, two creatures from the English legendary, are meant to function, if at all, eludes me. They may be intended as "hopeless spirits", representative of a by-passed spiritual clarity, the spirits of a lost England, a shade grotesque, but perhaps also wise. In "The Dreams of Nietzsche" these "hopeless spirits" are seen coming down

out of the golden baths of the sun and rainbowing molecular games
to weep themselves asleep in the cold cradles of the clay.

That last phrase is delicious. It evokes the spirit of Barker's poems more convincingly than do most of the poems themselves. In its effect, it is almost the opposite of what is available to him in the awkwardly truncated short lines of such poems as "Pascal's Nightmare", or "Zennor." And I object that Pascal should have nightmares when Nietzsche, who deserved them, is said to have dreams. That transference is characteristic of Barker's mind. Scepticism, the efforts of reason, eloquence, all these are held responsible for the victimisation of the Gods. There is a valid contemporary meaning in Barker's point of view; but increasingly I believe it to be the case that poetry as a means of expressing it does also caricature it, overstate it, rhapsodise it into an unconvincing exaggeration.

Yet Barker can also write a poem like "The Death of a Cat", which is an honourable addition to the classic English genre of feline elegy. Or a ballad reminiscent of Auden's weird balladic imagery, "Never a One, My Honey." Auden crops up again in the style and subject of "The Oak and the Olive." Surprisingly it is a later Auden than the one Barker might have been thought to prefer. Two moralised landscapes are presented, the Italian south and the Anglo-Saxon north, and Barker reaches much the same conclusions as Auden in "Goodbye to the Mezzogiorno."

JOHN FULLER'S NEW BOOK, *The Mountain in the Sea*,[2] also bears traces of admiration for Auden's later styles. Argumentative cadences, typical of Auden, show themselves in the first and last sections of the book, "Up and Down" and "Down and Up." Syllabics, or an approximate version of that by now infrequently employed technique, are used to measure the short lines of these technically impressive parts of the book. Fuller has always been the sort of poet whose technical dexterities glow on the page more convincingly than evidence of feeling or real, passionate involvement in what he says. While this has always been an easy criticism to make of Fuller's poems, there has always been some truth in it. In the new book all that earlier skill and intelligence are present as before, but they

[1] *Dialogues etc.* By GEORGE BARKER. Faber & Faber, £1.95.
[2] *The Mountain in the Sea.* By JOHN FULLER. Secker & Warburg, £2.40.

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appear to have gone into the treatment of his subjects instead of their presentation. He conducts his descriptions with almost stately consistency, but, in the first and last sections, there is something pleasingly clever about how these are treated. Something like secret discussion appears to be going on. There is a hint of spun-out or sustained kenning. Of sheep, for instance:

They own everything,
Saddled with foot-thick wool
And a family resemblance
Like the first Marlboroughs.

Inquisitive and alarmed,
Their slit eyes blank
As undone buttonholes,
They circle the cottage.

Throughout this part of the poem it is always easy enough to know Fuller is describing sheep. Only at the end does he actually use the name of the creatures, and then wittily.

They may, though bewildered,
Secretly guess our kinship,
Nomads to them and less
Aristocratic.

This would certainly account
For their intermittent patience,
Explain why we feel just
A little sheepish.

These examples of Fuller's recent verse could hardly be called "free." Yet in the past he did seem to squander what was noticeably poetic in his writing through a smart emphasis on a technical skill which too often seemed to be there for its own sake, or its owner's amusement. In the new book, language is handled more sensuously. Subjects are *shown* rather than told. Descriptions and images are allowed more space in which to realise themselves. His writing is much closer to its subjects. It appears lived with, more concerned with accuracy, with its poetic substance, than with opportunities for brilliance. There is the pleasurable feeling about the book of a talented man working towards a better and perhaps more exacting idiom than his previous concerns had allowed him.

FOR ALL THAT, Fuller is still a poet in whose work care and finish can be recognised as priorities. If there has been a revival of feeling in his poems, it looks unlikely to be at the cost of whatever chances of perfection he can seize. In this respect he is an instructive contrast with Rodney Pybus,[3] for whom themes and significances appear to matter more than the artistry with which they can be presented. Poetry has

[3] *Bridging Loans.* By RODNEY PYBUS. Chatto & Windus, £2.25.

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always dealt in urgencies other than those of its own constantly modified skills and styles, and at some phases of history more than at others. Many poets concerned to be contemporary—which is more than being concerned with language and its poetic disciplines—will agree that the main obstacle in the way of the primary, radical creativity most aspire towards achieving is the difficulty of embodying these social urgencies in forms worthy of both society *and* poetry. The problems of modern society are easily detectable. They are free, to hand, in any street, any town, in any stretch of countryside. Satisfactory forms of writing, however, are harder to come by. They cost considerably more than nothing.

The first poem in *Bridging Loans* is on one of Pybus's characteristic themes—

> *The green army is on the move, marching*
> *grass acres steadily reclaim*
> *from us what we have stolen—*

but, if these lines are thematically exact, their endings are haphazardly chosen even if in a crazily enforced scansion they are seen to be iambic. Pybus's work looks composed by verbal slab rather than by line. His poems are rhythmical only in the way that language can be made resonant and dense as in the long title poem about Newcastle's bridges and the historical, industrial surveys inspired by them. At times "Bridging Loans" reads like a curiously impassioned prose. The lesson, I think, is that when poetry moves too far from its principle of composition-by-line the chances of anything both musical *and* meaningful in language are seriously reduced.

In "Blinky Pop", a poem about a Geordie Steptoe, he attempts rhyming couplets in the forceful, impacted manner of Tony Harrison's *The Loiners*. But it's not Blinky Pop who materialises from the style so much as Harrison. If it is meant as pastiche, it falls far short of its model. Harrison's couplets pretend to have come from the elegant classics, their measure odorised by the stink of old canals—northernised, exact, and even scholarly.

Pybus is as literary a poet as Harrison pretends to be. Despite the northernness of some of his subjects, a poem like "Consequences of Salomé", about Pybus's imaginative relationship with Lou Andreas-Salomé, the friend of Nietzsche, Rilke and Freud, is almost entirely the result of the impact of reading on the imagination. There is also a poem in memory of Osip Mandelstam, which ends

> *From our seclusion*
> *let us number every minute*
>
> *of his* tristia. *And weigh up*
> *our gratitude for being ignored.*

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If Pybus lacks formal certainty in his poems, and if his poems fail to dramatise any struggle towards achieving it, there is still a compensating sanity about what he says. It may be that Pybus has his reasons for ignoring the amendments to traditional verse contemporary poets have been in the process of making. His literary poems, for instance, are in this book, as in his first, about obvious European figures, and the influence of modern European writing might be stronger in Pybus' work than I am qualified to detect. Yet his *vers libre* looks like free verse to me and not *vers libéré*. His only principle seems to be that of effective statement, of getting it said. Pybus's intelligence is formidable; but he does seem to have allowed his subjects that specious freedom of being unattended by the stricter control I think is necessary. His themes are good; his language is hard and contemporary. All that is lacking is evidence of artistry, that ability to turn language in the realms of imagination so that it emerges on the page in its own strictly defined authority. That he has not done that effectively enough is suggested by the extent to which he has not picked up the fine, large metaphor lurking in his poems, which would persuasively associate one of his themes, the ruination of nature and its subsequent rebellions, with that other theme of political liberty and the artist.

A YOUNG POET from the north of Ireland, Ciaran Carson,[4] has used the support of the poetry that flourishes there to help him solve the persistent difficulty of subject and form. It will look like simplifying matters if I say that much of that problem, at a practical level, is to know where lines should end. Poetry runs down the middle of the page. There are wide, white margins. There must be a reason why it should continue to be so after an inherited prosody has fallen into neglect. The subject is a large one. Sometimes you see poems where the lines are fragmented, spread out, indented, all over the page. The reason, we are told, is to guide the reader to the emphasis to be given each part of the poem, like, I suppose, stage directions. Yet the language of the theatre until a relatively recent date was verse, and neither Shakespeare nor Molière thought it worthwhile to make a speech so stagnantly unchallenging to read as to actually break up each line. The shapes of verse still operate, but like ghosts.

Those who write free verse more often than not

[4] *The New Estate*. By CIARAN CARSON. Blackstaff Press, £1.50.

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lack the courage to take it into the prose-poetry which is probably its end. Nor do they allow their lines the length sometimes required of them; instead, they break them, on words like "the" and "and", and at other syntactically inappropriate places, to make their writing "look like" verse, with no rhythmic effects you can hear to make up for it. Neither verse nor elegance have inherent benefits of themselves, and it is because of this that I find Ciaran Carson's poems of interest. He has come early to a sensible craftsmanship, not overloaded with its own good looks, but measured, giving evidence to the reader that the writing has been thought about more than once.

Carson is less robust a poet than Pybus, and less dextrous than Fuller. There is an ease about his writing, a feeling of slow, forward exploration:

Having left solid ground behind
In the hardness of their place-names,
They have sailed out for an island:

As along the top of a wood
Their boats have crossed the green ridges,
So has the pale sky overhead

Appeared as a milky surface,
A white plain where the speckled fish
Drift in lamb-white clouds of fleece.

Nothing roars off the page in Carson's book. The tone is one of loss and wonder; his assurances are muted, worn lightly. A little verbal excitement ought to be allowed to get into his repertoire. But even if he seldom raises his voice, there is fright and violence in the poems, elegiacally written, which is as decent as indignation. The way his lines touch each other to form a sudden tune shows the authenticity of his compromise with verse.

THROWING VERSE OVERBOARD in his first book, William Peskett[5]—once a resident of Belfast—attempts to create the appearance of imagination in its one, apt, strict vocabulary. Measuring the sounds in a line appeals to him less than it obviously does to Ciaran Carson. But there is a poetry in the naked revelation of mind and experience without the sensuous recording of them provided by the many conventions of artifice.

Peskett's education as a zoologist allows him to write of creatures without showing off in wild anthropomorphic allegories. He can portray animal violence more convincingly than many who have been impressed by Ted Hughes's work. Peskett's "nightowl" however is not at all like Crow or any other Hughesian beast. Its function is entirely different. It signifies the nature not amenable to scientific inquiry, the secret in life, perhaps imagination and creativity, the unexpected factor. This theme recurs, notably in "Stem of Life", "The Nightowl's Examination" and "The Dissection."

The nightowl preys
the breadth of the moon,
confronts the crossfire
between the men above
and the men below.

The nightowl escapes
to the dark side.
I will not pursue him
or bring him down to earth.
For me his secrets soar.

Taking this together with Pybus's poetry of a revengeful nature—"The green army is on the move"—we can see two examples of a revived natural respect in poetry. It is an important theme in recent poetry which could do with being anthologised and discussed.

THE "WITTY CLOWNING VERSE" of Michael Foley,[6] also northern Irish, is at a far remove from the green army. But the nature of a thigh length black boot on a shapely leg—as, facetiously, on Foley's cover—is not to be sneezed at: I think I might prefer it to rampant daisies. Foley's principle is: "I think, therefore I ham." Poetically, the state of mind is,

No delicate pose poems here, please,
no delicate brush
strokes of lilac and mauve.

Pose is exactly what Foley's work will have to be called. Deliberate, glaring, but also vivacious and lively, if at times crudely so (not morally: technically, in the writing). With even more

[5] *The Nightowl's Dissection.* By WILLIAM PESKETT. Secker & Warburg, £2.40.
[6] *True Life Love Stories.* By MICHAEL FOLEY. Blackstaff Press, £1.25.

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courage, Foley could become a fine satirist. We do not lack satirists. We *do* lack satirists capable of something more contemporary than jived-up Popean ensembles. Mr Foley could be on that tack. He has the candour, verve, mischief, and tastelessness. His verse drives colloquially forward. Few poets alive are up to this sort of impertinence—

Yes, I remember Adlestrop.
Such an innocent vague
Neither-here-nor-there poem
—Yet it started so much crap.

Though Thomas was no rat
His poems began the trend
This impression of Big Things *going on*
Though of course you're not told what.

It's strange that Larkin, an admirer of Thomas, should be the stylistic influence here.

FROM MICHAEL FOLEY TO DICK DAVIS[7] is a big jump. Davis's poems embody a last-ditch mellifluousness, his subjects being love and a residual, classic culture fading into its own luminous ruins. The harmony of his language is worthy of better subjects than "Diana and Actaeon" or "The Youth of Telemachus." Contemporary in language, Davis has overdone what Rodney Pybus has not done at all, which is the mastery of a technique. Poems like "Service" and "Art Historian" are better than the precious evocations to which he is prone. His short poems are particularly good. He is much more assured in his traditional techniques than most of the younger poets. "Reading after Opium"—

Precise and indefinable: like scent
The drug diffuses, eddies, in his mind.

"God", "love":
he gropes to what the words once meant,
As if these gentle pastures had been mined.

Davis says very little which I feel called on to attend to. Yet he has prepared himself for more important subjects, should he ever find them to hand. That suavely distilled melancholy, braced only at rare moments with a critical or acid mood, could easily become tedious; I should think he has reached a point in his writing where something more energetic, perhaps even eccentric, is being called for. But *In the Distance* is an excellent start, a good book to progress from.

INDEED THE CROP of first books under review is all in one way or another impressive Paul Mills's *North Carriageway*[8] is also a first book, distinguished by its forceful, concentrated language. A poem like "The Imaginative Scientist" suggests he is at least partly involved in the same area of the imagination as William Peskett. Many of Mills's poems are intensely sustained descriptions of creatures and natural phenomena. I notice that both Mills and Peskett are probably of the generation that first had Ted Hughes's *Hawk in the Rain* on the school syllabus. Poems like "Owl", "Shark" (pre-*Jaws*), "Lizard" and "Rock Pool" do recollect Hughes's earlier poems. Inevitably the imagery is less startling, the obsession with violence less surprising. Where the influence—if it is that—has been invaluable is in the development of endurance in imaginative concentration, the ability to prolong the imaginative effort with consistency.

Unfortunately Mills is like most contemporary poets in being weak on the woodwind side of his orchestra. His language is all percussion, his sounds all deep vowels, grating cellos. His poems make good noises; but the sounds of words are not used for their function in a melody. Each poem, so to speak, consists of one note; and that note crops up too often. But there is a fine and sensuous gift in his imagination that allows him to bend one word sensuously against another. This is apparent in "Turner", where the painter speaks:

I look down at my boots
My big sea boots. Today
It is the gleam in leather
Fascinates me. And God's
Gift of slain calves' skins
Makes such beauty my terror.

---

[7] *In the Distance*. By DICK DAVIS. Anvil Press Poetry, £1.50.

[8] *North Carriageway*. By PAUL MILLS. Carcanet Press, £2.00.

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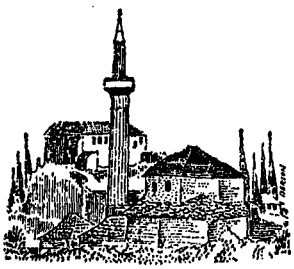
Letter from Yugoslavia

Can Opposites Be Reconciled?

By Hans Heigert



THE AUTOPUT from Zagreb to Niš *via* Belgrade is reputedly the most dangerous highway in the world. Its ribbon of worn asphalt is fringed with the wrecks of articulated lorries and motor cars, many of them still smoking. Commonest cause of these accidents: driver-fatigue. The vehicles are *en route* from Denmark, Holland and Germany for Turkey, Iran, and heaven knows where else. Even at off-peak periods (touristically speaking) every minute brings more cars heading south with Central European number-plates and—often enough—mountains of baggage on their roof-racks. Piloting them are swarthy figures, manifestly Arabs of every oriental provenance; the road is a gigantic caravan route between West and East. For journeys in the opposite direction, many voyagers seem to favour air travel or, at a pinch, the good old Baghdad Railway and the Orient Express. Obviously, business is booming.

Even this is no novelty to these wide open Balkan spaces. They not only carried caravans plying between Europe and Asia for at least 2,000 years but have been trodden by the cohorts and regiments of every conceivable army. (Serbia did not benefit as a result, and its history has been marked by successive humiliations.) Leaving the arterial road and its through-traffic—the hackneyed term retains its validity here—one quickly enters a desolation of barren and interminable mountains. The scattered villages, though still locked in battle with mud or dust, show clear signs of rural building activity. Here and there one spies a primitive mine, a tiny workshop or a cattle market of the sort that has remained unchanged for generations. Less common, and found only at very wide intervals, are small Orthodox monasteries. These are not spacious precincts conveying an appearance of former wealth, but squat little churches closely jostled by modest outbuildings and surrounded by massive walls strangely thicker and taller than the buildings inside them.

One gains a sudden inkling of what has shaped the character of this Serbian people: endurance of foreign rule, resistance to foreign influence, latent rebellion. Cohesion was a laborious process and hard to maintain. The sole medium of national understanding throughout centuries of Turkish domination may ultimately have been the folk-song. The Serbs' plaintive melodies recall the singing of the Orthodox liturgy, and their folk-dances, very seldom wild or ecstatic, are always performed by a circle of friends with arms linked or draped round shoulders—yet another symbol of solidarity in the face of outsiders?

The Serbs claim that it was they who repeatedly tried to found an "independent South Slav state." This has not only made them a proud people but engendered an authoritarianism which provokes suspicion and dislike among their neighbours. A typical joke, which I heard several times on my journey: "Why are the Turks so backward? . . . Because they had to contend with the Serbs for 500 years!" But what of the others?

THE SLOVENES far away to the north have always felt more like Central Europeans and probably are so. The oppressed Croats were for ever partitioned under Venetian, Austrian, and Hungarian rule, though the characteristics of their oppressors and their own natural assets helped them to become genial in temperament and, above all, good businessmen. Only in Dalmatia's Dubrovnik does pride persist in a rich history of independence and mature statecraft. The Montenegrins, further south, were the only Slav people in the Balkans to defy conquest by the Turks, managing to remain free for centuries in their wild mountain preserves, satisfying their needs by an occasional raid on the Sultan's caravans. Montenegrin unity was thus based on the rules of war and a system of hierarchical authority, not on economic necessities. By contrast, the Macedonians in the extreme south of modern Yugoslavia remained under Turkish rule until the present century. This being so, they had little opportunity to develop a sense of nationhood or to organise even the simplest form of self-government. A touch of melancholy seems uppermost in their nature.

HANS HEIGERT *is chief editor of the "Süddeutsche Zeitung" in Munich.*

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Finally, the Bosnians of the central mountains —or do they exist at all? Are they really just a mixture of Croats and Serbs? Questions like these sound presumptuous and disparaging. What is certainly true is that this region of dense forests always tended to be remote and forgotten, with a backwoods reputation. Many of the inhabitants of Sarajevo were more or less forcibly converted to the Mohammedan faith, and so much that went on there proceeded fatalistically.

Far from finding himself in the oriental paradise of the travel brochures, however, anyone visiting Sarajevo these days will discover it to be an industrial city veiled in stinking smog. The vapour-shrouded basin in which it lies is encircled to an altitude of 6,000 feet and for 20 miles around with week-end retreats and holiday homes—socialism *à la* Bosnia, but also indicative of fast-growing prosperity and changing attitudes.

But all such Balkan generalisations must be made with care. This is a highly sensitive country, unable to cope with West European ironies and easily provoked. The grand gesture still reigns here, as does hospitality of an exceptional order: the "great Slav soul" aspires to be indulgent, humane, not always committed to the logic and rigour of the prevailing system. Only those who have attended schools and universities in the West can be heard savagely and angrily inveighing against "nepotism . . . laxity . . . corruption" and the hectic "craze for self-enrichment." This is not at all Tito's tone in self-criticism. Instead, he adopts an understanding paternalism when enumerating so-called abuses. As he recently declared with fatherly severity, it is so hard to abolish, or even control, selfishness and the "illegitimate accumulation of capital" when everyone after all wants to help his friends and nobody wants to hurt anybody.

How, then, does it hold together at all, this State which so carefully avoids being regarded as the embodiment of a Nation? The Yugoslavs I talked with on this visit produced two conflicting but equally simple answers to this question. Both are as wrong as anything about this country that tries to explain it "simply". The first answer runs: "The State doesn't cohere at all—come tomorrow, they'll all be at each other's throats." The second: "This is a Communist dictatorship—the Party governs by employing subtle methods of intimidation or, if necessary, bare-faced terror." Neither alternative can be dismissed, but it is more probable that what is somehow specifically Yugoslav will survive. What they refer to as their "own road" is anything but a mere form of words.

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THE YUGOSLAVS are engaged in something quite exceptional: a sensitively planned "Federalism" that seems wholly at odds with experience and necessity; a system of "Worker Self-management" of the sort that figures in the Communist picture-book but has never evolved viably anywhere; and a "Rotation principle" for all senior personnel which would make any anti-authoritarian heart beat higher, if only it worked. There is but one adjective that conveys something of the ideas behind this system: "sophisticated", *i.e.* abstract, scientifically worked out, and designed for an exceptionally well-educated and highly moral citizenry. These ideas presuppose not only that there are adequate numbers of people capable of implementing them (a controversial point even among Yugoslav Communists) but, even more, that they are genuinely compatible with "human nature", or known forms of human behaviour.

YUGOSLAVIA'S FEDERALISM seems quite impractical from the large perspective of State administration. The Republics constitute the

The Popovic Case:

SRDJA POPOVIC *is a Yugoslav lawyer who was charged with "spreading false news." The unique quality of the case (there is of course nothing unique, in tyrannies like Yugoslavia, about people being charged with such spurious offences when they have said or done something even mildly critical of the regime) is provided by the fact that Mr Popovic was prosecuted for what he said,* in his role as counsel for the defence, *in an earlier political "show trial."*

This was of a prominent Yugoslav writer, poet and philosopher, Dragoljub Ignjatovic, who had had the temerity, at an academic seminar, to tell a tiny part of the truth about the condition to which three decades of Tito's dictatorship has reduced the Yugoslav people. Mr Ignjatovic spoke of

> **a backward agriculture, an industry which cannot compete ... low productivity which is growing lower and lower, inflation, a poor and disorganised health service ... mass illiteracy, unemployment ... lies as the only form of communication, a counterfeit information service. ...**

He also gave something of the political background to these conditions:

> **... the bureaucracy in power, having no support and so being afraid of everything, reacts nervously to any sound of life ... allowing freedom of thought and creativity only to those of feeble creative powers and to the apologists ... the tendency to transform and extend the mostly peasant national liberation movement into a social revolution (... economic and political equality ... free election) is completely annulled ... the evil must be resisted ... this is neither capitalism nor socialism. It is semi-barbarism. ...**

For saying these things, Mr Ignjatovic was sentenced, last October, to three-and-a-half years' imprisonment.

THE CASE *had aroused widespread protests, not only in the world outside (he was adopted as a "prisoner of conscience" by Amnesty, for instance), but even in Yugoslavia, where the Writers' Union took up his case. Realising that the affair was becoming a considerable source of embarrassment, the Yugoslav authorities hastily released Mr Ignjatovic, claiming that they were doing so on grounds of ill-health (something they have refused to do in less embarrassing cases even when their victims are very seriously ill, as is Mihajlo Mihajlov, who is still in jail for criticising Tito). But in the course of the Ignjatovic "trial", Mr Popovic, whom Ignjatovic had engaged because the lawyer has a long and outstandingly courageous record of willingness to defend Yugoslavia's political victims, had said and done things which looked likely to cause Tito and his regime a great deal more embarrassment than any outcry from the West.*

In his defence of Ignjatovic, Mr Popovic carefully separated, in considering the words that had provoked the charges, the factual statements from the opinions. Under Yugoslav law (ignored by the regime, of course) the defendant had the right to express the opinions, and as for the facts—about the economic situation, the health service, illiteracy and unemployment, &c—Mr Popovic's defence produced one of those farcical situations inseparable from the administration of what passes for justice in a communist country. He explains what happened:

> **The facts, I thought, should be proved false by the prosecution, and since the prosecution failed even to try to prove that these facts are false Mr Ignjatovic and myself asked the court to obtain official reports from the state administration ... the request was refused,** *on the grounds that these facts are more or less generally known to be true.* **[My italics].**

MR POPOVIC, *for his record as defence counsel in many of Yugoslavia's political show trials, had long been a marked man, and the regime now moved against him, with the pretext that, in trying to establish in the course of the trial that Mr Ignjatovic's facts were true, he had himself been guilty of "spreading false rumours." Such a prosecution (a verdict of guilty would obviously be arranged in advance) would have a double effect; it would remove Mr Popovic himself from the scene (a prison sentence would automatically involve his disbarment), and would powerfully intimidate any other lawyers who might be considering defending the regime's political victims. (Though one, at least, remained undeterred, for Mr Popovic managed to find a lawyer willing to defend him.)*

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Federation, not *vice versa*: Belgrade leans more heavily on these federative units than does, say, Bonn in the West German Federal Republic. Financial allocations, for example, are freshly redetermined year by year, and a great deal of time-wasting and inefficiency stems from this alone (the complex system seems to have been devised by Tito himself). Serbia, for instance, was not meant to grow "too large" and thus give its neighbours claustrophobia; so autonomous regions were lopped off it. Vojvodina, north of Belgrade, is inhabited by Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, a few German left-overs, some gipsies and numerous other ethnic groups imported, in her day, by Maria Theresa. Kosovo, in the south, harbours 900,000 Albanians and a lot of irredentist sentiment. The first region is extremely prosperous, the second a veritable poorhouse by comparison.

A wide variety of these elaborate administrative divisions came into being. The "Mussulmans" of Bosnia were declared a "People" in their own right, which Serbs of the Islamic faith never really were (besides, the faith is rapidly dying out).

. . . *Speaking the Truth*

When the case began, he argued that he had been obliged, in defending Mr Ignjatovic, to dispute the prosecution's claims (the precise offence of which he was accused was "having said . . . that the facts qualified by the District Attorney as hostile propaganda were true facts"), and the prosecution called two witnesses, both of whom had been present at the Ignjatovic trial, to testify as to exactly what Popovic had said there. One of these, when he got into the witness box, entirely supported Mr Popovic's defence; the other said only that he had had a general impression that the lawyer had expressed agreement with his client's views. Despite (or rather because of) this fiasco on the part of the prosecution, Mr Popovic's counsel was not allowed to call any witnesses in his defence (he had nine ready to give evidence); his own defence counsel then proceeded to put himself into exactly the same position as had Popovic in defending Ignjatovic—that is, he spoke on his client's behalf, in doing so disputed the prosecution's case, and thus rendered himself liable to be proceeded against, in turn, for the same offence of "spreading false rumours with malicious intent." (So far, he has not been charged.)

THE "COURT" *carried out its instructions, and Mr Popovic was found guilty, sentenced to a year's imprisonment, and disbarred; he appealed. (It was while his appeal was pending that the "World in Action" TV team went to Yugoslavia and spoke to him, and his frankness in speaking on film in those circumstances betokens courage on a scale which is almost that of a Solzhenitsyn.) He also, incidentally, asked the Yugoslav Bar Association for support, pointing out the obvious implications for all of them. They refused to help. (Compare the similar divergence between the* individual *courage and honesty of those South African lawyers who dare to defend the regime's victims and the craven and shabby* collective *behaviour of the South African Bar.) But a group of 32 Yugoslav writers and academics signed a powerful and outspoken protest at the case. It deserves quotation:*

This logically impossible, legally astonishing and politically harmful conclusion of the court is based on a fiction. . . . As citizens and public servants we vigorously protest against the sentence . . . without precedent in the records of the legal system of Yugoslavia. If it becomes final it actually declares illegal the institution of defence in our system of criminal law. . . .

This could not be published in Yugoslavia, of course, but it was sent to the Yugoslav authorities; at the same time, the outcry elsewhere in the world continued. And last week, Mr Popovic's appeal was heard. His prison sentence was suspended, and his disbarment was limited to one year. He is convinced that it was only the campaign of international protest that saved him from jail and the permanent destruction of his career. Yet his conviction *stands, and it is therefore now a settled principle of Yugoslav law that a lawyer who maintains the innocence of his client in a political trial is committing a criminal offence.*

ONE OTHER POINT *is worth remarking on. The official Yugoslav defence of the use of political trials, the numbers of which continue to increase, is that they are directed against Soviet agents and sympathisers who want to restore Yugoslavia to the Soviet empire; Tito repeated this claim on his recent visit to Stockholm. Not only is it false—there are no more than a handful of "Stalinists" in Yugoslavia (as Popovic said in the interview: "They have no support in Yugoslavia at all—among the people I know, there is not one single person that would for a second support any Stalinist politics")—but Tito had already been given the lie by his own Minister of the Interior, who earlier this year admitted that of the 200 Yugoslavs awaiting trial on political charges, no more than 30 are alleged to be Soviet supporters; the rest are critics of the regime from the same standpoint as Mr Ignjatovic, Mr Popovic and the 32 signatories of the protest at the lawyer's conviction—that is, those who want more freedom in Yugoslavia. Or, as the organiser of the petition of the 32 put it: "We need freedom to speak the truth." Yes, indeed; but that freedom is what Communist tyrannies such as Tito's deny. And the Popovic case has emphasised the denial.*

Bernard Levin
in *The Times* (London)

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And the reason for all this? It may be shrewdness that prevails here—or the *divide et impera* principle—or a combination of both.

WORKER SELF-MANAGEMENT springs from a quasi-romantic social philosophy: no one person shall hold sway over another; no decision shall be taken without the authority of those it affects; self-determination must become the vehicle of emancipation. This is why Yugoslav workers' councils have to arrange the planning and balance the books of "their" enterprises, decide how to distribute profits and deal with losses, appoint and supervise boards of management. Yugoslavs are spoon-fed with the slogans of this philosophy at every turn.

The true state of affairs is harder to elicit, for no Western correspondent can study industrial practice at first hand. Some shining examples must doubtless exist, but anyone who scrutinises the official admonitions will gain a fair idea of the other side of the coin. There is talk of "managerial egoism" and the "petty capitalist mentality", also of the way in which a few directors run firms "as if they were their own private property." Newspapers, too, are constantly denouncing such abuses. One reads of factories that build ski lodges in the neighbouring mountains, only to reserve them for the managers (and manageresses) of the Board. Elsewhere, an excessive proportion of profits is lavished on the labour force at the expense of necessary financial reserves; luxury cars are purchased for senior management; profit-bringing investments are made in other branches of industry—and all without regard to the good of the Economy as a Whole. Fine capitalist goings-on, one might say. Theoretically, the frontiers of socialism are "fluid" but they are also kept in a state of real flux by Yugoslavia's powerful and influential Directors.

And yet one also comes across remarkable pieces of ingenuity. Not far from the prison outside Sarajevo they have built a modern "gourmet's paradise" in a nearby park—"they" being the prison governors. The restaurant is entirely run by prisoners, who provide all the staff (chefs, waiters, washroom attendants). Only casual offenders are seconded to these duties, of course (*i.e.* not hardened criminals). No visitor ignorant of the true state of affairs would ever suspect that the excellent service is being given by "convicts." This is more than modern penal policy: it makes a certain amount of economic sense as well. The excellent table returns such a profit that the prison, which owns it, no longer needs financing by the State! This is yet another page in the chapter entitled "Yugoslav Self-management."

FINALLY, THE ROTATION PRINCIPLE. This prescribes that every senior post in the Federation, in the regions and cities, in the Party, in the government organisations and industry, shall be reassigned—ideally every four years, at most every eight years, and in exceptional cases after twelve years. Where Federal authorities are concerned, this is designed to "rotate" members of the various nationalities, which is why the names of government officials are so often followed by initials denoting their ethnic group (*S, C, Mac, Mon, B-H, Sl*). The same principle is also justified (rather feebly I thought) by an assertion that it will prevent "bureaucratic ossification" and combat inertia. In other words, every individual must now exert himself to obtain good seats on the élite administrative merry-go-round. I can also report that the Yugoslavs resent being told that this type of reward-for-merit principle embodies features of China's great Cultural Revolution.

The disadvantages are obvious. Can every Minister take over a senior Party post at the next rotation, or become an Editor-in-chief, or an industrial manager (and *vice versa*)? Considerable wear-and-tear results, and there can be no serious talk of reasonably efficient "rationalisation." Here again, devotion to an abstract principle simply conflicts with real life, with humdrum realities—with "human nature" and the obviously urgent need to build up a corps of industrial and administrative specialists. My attention was none the less drawn to another aspect of this reality. The "rotation principle" is intended to bring about what has so far proved extraordinarily difficult, *i.e.* the weeding-out of people who, for all their meritorious service during the War and in the Party, are just not up to the demands of today.

The visitor is quite openly reminded that, as recently as 1971, 15% of the population were illiterate (in Slovenia almost none, in Bosnia very many more!); 30 years ago the figure in some areas was 70%; and even those who could read and write learnt little beyond that. Secondary schools were few in number and universities could almost be counted on the fingers of one hand. However, now that many "deserving" people are being compelled to vacate senior posts but cannot, on the other hand, be put on the dole, pensions are becoming a burden on the State. Tito has personally ordained that even some of his most inveterate opponents should be awarded generous State pensions, and this practice has caught on lower down the scale—a Party precept with a Slav complexion.

So what is this party with the rather antiquated-sounding name: "the League of Communists of Yugoslavia"? Is it a cohort of *cadres* and popular

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educators, a traditional instrument of political authority, or merely an opportunist façade? It is all these things at once, but none of them absolutely. The "liberalism" of the years prior to 1972, now under constant attack, was largely a Party phenomenon. Casual indifference, ideological laxity, and inadequate "vigilance" against the class enemy—such are the themes of current self-criticism. The time has once more come to bone up on Marxism, whatever that may mean in the Yugoslav interpretation—not Soviet centralism, naturally, nor Maoism, nor yet the Frankfurt School, (Adorno, Marcuse, and all that) or the "heretical" philosophical ideas of the Yugoslav academics associated with the Belgrade periodical *Praxis*. The Yugoslavs are relatively open to fresh interpretations. Tito's Party has its deepest roots in the wartime Partisan campaign. It is *de facto* not an organisation of the "working class", and so composed—as in all East European countries—of salaried employees and senior bureaucrats. In Yugoslavia, as elsewhere, professional advancement is virtually impossible without Party membership.

The important thing, however, is this: apart from the Army, the League is the only truly *Yugoslav* institution. I would deem it a supposition bordering on certainty that, without the Party, the post-War State of Yugoslavia would never have come into being, and that the country would even today fall apart without disciplined organisation. Anyone is at liberty to decry or deplore this. And who can be certain what will happen when the old guard has passed into history and a younger and less hidebound generation assumes control of the country's social system? Knowledgeable observers see no prospect of civil war, or even of "ethnic disintegration", because this youthful Nation learns with every passing year that common sense prescribes the maintenance of its Federal integrity. Communism may gradually wither away, but the State will endure—a reversal of the ideological vision cherished by Marx and Tito.

FOR THE PRESENT, Yugoslavia remains something of a marvel. The country has since 1945 enjoyed a longer period of peace than ever before in its recorded history (or so Yugoslavs and visitors are credibly informed). Its peculiar amalgam of socialised means of production and private enterprise, central planning and free economy, Party control and self-management, intellectualism and illiteracy, discipline and laxity, dogma and humanity—all this goes to make up the "System." We cannot tell whether or how it will survive, but where else in the world can one find its like?

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MEMOIR

How Good was Keynes' Cambridge?

By Harry G. Johnson

THESE REMARKS owe their inspiration to conversation with friends who were raising questions about the relations between the (relatively few) economists with whom John Maynard Keynes was personally and intellectually concerned during the transition from the *Treatise* (1930) to the *General Theory* (1936). Most of them (especially if F. A. Hayek and Lionel Robbins at the London School of Economics are excluded as targets or butts representing "orthodoxy") were Cambridge acquaintances, and most of those Cambridge colleagues. What was Cambridge like in the period of writing of the *General Theory*, as an environment for economic discussion and research?

These questions struck a bell in my mind, since I have long been interested in the influence of the physical and social geography of economics departments on their character and their style of economic research. By physical geography here I mean what the terms imply—the spatial relationships and dimensions within which economists carry on their work. "Social geography" is a more ambitious and far vaguer concept. I mean by it generally the social relationships among members of the same academic department, as influenced on the one hand by the hierarchy of tenure, remuneration, and power of decision or of influence over collective decision, and on the other hand by the activities and responsibilities of the department—especially teaching responsibilities, but sometimes also research responsibilities—and the cooperative efforts they may entail. I am also thinking of the social relationships of the department with its clientele—mainly its students; with its colleagues (peers) in departments in the rest of the university or similar institution in which it exists; with the professional academic community at large; and with the larger society of which the university is a constituent and into which most of its students graduate. All these relationships have an influence on both the style and content of economic discussion with colleagues in, and close acquaintances outside, the department, and the choice of audience and style of addressing it for oral (usually unpublished) and written (published) communication at the academic and professional level.

LET ME ILLUSTRATE BRIEFLY and casually the kind of influence I have in mind.

My first teaching post was as a one-man replacement for a two-man department at Saint Francis Xavier University. I was very lonely, a stranger in all relevant ways. The effect was to press me strongly into reading, and on to writing lengthy serious letters to distant friends. My predecessor, like my current colleagues in other fields, belonged to the community and was clearly exclusively a teacher of the young in the ways of the world as he understood them. I was shocked by his boast that he "used the textbook only as a whipping-boy", because I was too inexperienced to realise that what he had to whip it with was his (and the students' parent's) social and economic experience. *His* quondam colleague, a very cultured German refugee, had like myself taken refuge in prodigious reading, and he became a figure of student fun for his inappropriate scholarship. We were both misfits. The place demanded a concern with low-level teaching and the formation of adult character; and it called for an identification of economic and social interests with those of a generally poor community of farmers, fishermen, and coal miners, as against an exploiting class of shopkeepers, equipment-suppliers, local bankers, and the coal and steel company.

My next teaching position was at the University of Toronto, as an Instructor (below a Lecturer, and therefore not a voting member).

HARRY JOHNSON *is Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago. Among his contributions to* ENCOUNTER *are his memoir, "Cambridge in the 1950s" (January 1974), "A Word to the Third World" (October 1971), "Revolution & Counter-Revolution in Economics" (April 1971), and "A Catarrh of Economists? From Keynes to Postan" (May 1968).*

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The department was housed in an old building (formerly the McMaster University building) on the northern fringe of the campus between the football field and the Ontario Museum, so that one tended to eat in nearby cheap restaurants and not to consider oneself at all as part of a university community. Large offices and lecture rooms were on the ground floor, small offices on the fourth floor, with stairs (and no elevator) connecting them. Senior and much older staff members had the ground-floor offices, junior untenured staff the fourth-floor cubby-holes. The vertical geographical distance between the two faculty groups corresponded to an age difference, a tenure and rank difference, and a social distance. Communication was difficult and almost non-existent. One saw the Department Head briefly on appointment, to discuss teaching duties and any difficulties one was foolish enough to voice; and once at one of two Sunday tea-parties he offered to junior staff late in the year (one for sheep possibly on their way down from the fourth floor to the ground floor, and one for goats definitely on their way down from the fourth floor to the exit door). Apart from that, one saw him only by appointment under strain, usually for advice or a reference in connection with a possible job for next year. His stock response to an implicit request for reassurance was "Well, we wouldn't want to stand in your way." As a result, the ethos of the fourth floor was one of gossip, rumour, and sometimes panic, of needlessly hard and unfocused work. It induced a conviction that one was not good enough to be a scholar, that if one were one would not produce anything for hopeless years ahead, and that if one did produce something it would be read only by a handful of other scholars, all of whom would be devastatingly critical. No wonder so many used the exit.

AS A FINAL EXAMPLE before I return to my main theme, I would contrast briefly Harvard and Yale with Chicago in the 1960s (both, I admit, from a Chicago standpoint). Harvard and Yale were not (and are not now), in my objective judgment, Departments of Economics in the same sense as Chicago. They were congeries of small personal departments depending from individual senior professors, to whose seminars (their main activity) transient Assistant Professors attached themselves. The number and the transience of the Assistant Professors reflected the labour-intensive undergraduate teaching responsibilities of the Departments. The relatively small quantity, and the policy orientation, of the published output of the tenured staff reflected the social position of the two Ivy League schools in the American society, and particularly the reliance of Democratic Party government on the advice and participation of established academic figures. Chicago's much larger published output, by contrast, represented the position of the social "outsider" and, in a general way, the lesser role of the academic in the Republican Party's approach to government. Chicago, also, had no undergraduate teaching responsibilities, hence no need for numbers of transient Assistant Professors; and hence the ability to absorb a few transients into a much larger (but still numerically small) professional and social community. In addition, the Chicago academic community mostly lived within a mile of the campus, which both made encounters in the course of out-of-hours visits likely, and informal social gatherings at home easy to arrange—in contrast to the far-flung suburban living patterns of Harvard, M.I.T., and Yale. Physical geography was also important: the Harvard and Yale economists were scattered among widely separated buildings, whereas the Chicago economists lived on one (the fourth) floor with a single elevator around and in which they automatically met frequently and informally.

I NOW TURN to my theme: Cambridge as an academic environment for economics in the early 1930s. What I have to say is a reconstruction based on my own experience, as a student in 1945–46 and an Assistant Lecturer/Lecturer from January 1949 to March 1956 (especially the first year or two, while Cambridge was still living the life and carrying on the fights of the 1930s).[1]

The dominant fact of Cambridge physical and social geography was the Colleges, and the system of (predominately undergraduate) teaching based on them. Most of the serious teaching was done by supervision, usually by a Fellow of the College specialising in the relevant subject. This consisted of an hour a week per individual student (or for as small a group as could be managed, the numbers being vastly enlarged in

[1] This was before the Department of Applied Economics shifted from its temporary building on the courtyard of the Downing Street science buildings complex; and before the Faculty of Economics and Politics and the Marshall Library shifted from the meagre facilities the Faculty had occupied in that complex since 1912 and the Library since 1925, respectively to the present reconditioned old house on West Road (the Department) and the modern buildings, complete with library, lecture rooms, auditorium, and most noticeably individual faculty offices and common room, they now occupy on Sidgwick Avenue, across the river near the University Library. For simplicity of writing, I shall describe Cambridge as it was prior to the geographical shift and concentration of location, and ignore the Department of Applied Economics which was not in existence anyway in the early 1930s.

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the years of the post-War bulge), the supervision being based on an essay topic (either invented, or drawn from past examinations) assigned one week, and written, turned in, read, and discussed the next week. Holders of university assistant lectureships and higher posts were limited to twelve hours of supervision a week (except for Professors, who were not allowed to supervise undergraduates). Fellows of Colleges without university appointments, of whom there were some even in economics (such as Gerald Shove, long discriminated against as a conscientious objector in the First World War), were subject to no such restriction; and some, such as Shove, bore a very heavy teaching burden. Some Colleges, notably King's, restricted their Fellows to teaching their own College's students only; other Colleges were easier on this point. Colleges without Fellows relied on the services of University teachers without Fellowships, such as Maurice Dobb, my own undergraduate supervisor at Jesus (long denied a Fellowship because he was an avowed Communist); and, in the post-War period at least, on graduate students and staff members of the Department of Applied Economics, though usually mainly for first-year-student supervision. University teachers without Fellowships had a lonely life. On the other hand, they were not obliged to take all the students admitted by the College Tutor. I remember a friend being shocked when Richard Kahn told him that a certain first-year King's student he was supervising was certain to fail at the end of the year—but my friend had to teach him through the year anyway. They could instead, if good enough, "shop around" for good students (as Joan Robinson did very shrewdly in my day).

A UNIVERSITY APPOINTMENT was not necessary to a successful Cambridge career. In some ways, indeed, a University position could be an inhibiting responsibility, since some of the College jobs were much better paid than University teaching posts but required either very long hours of extra work, or the sacrifice of ambition extending beyond the lectureship level, or too much effort to be consistent with a teaching post; on the other hand, a Professorship involved resignation or abstention from any College post, as well as sacrifice of income from undergraduate supervision (a fact about which Richard Kahn protested bitterly when he became a Professor and had to cease being Bursar of King's). In addition, a University appointee was required to live not more than five miles from Great St Mary's, and to be in residence a stipulated and fairly large minimum number of nights per term. By regulation, a University teacher who had a Fellowship received (in the early 1950s) only £100 a year of his Fellowship stipend above his university salary, though of course he also got a room or rooms, free dinners, and an entertainment allowance (and, if I remember correctly, free postage). In the inflation of post-War II, however, and with the spreading tendency of Cambridge academics to marry young, the University gradually came to dominate the College as a source of income—one result being the initiation and subsequent improvement of social and catering facilities for non-College-Fellow teachers and researchers.

The University appointment, as such, was a very minor part of an individual's teaching responsibilities—that obligation William Brian Reddaway at one stage used to refer to as "the forty-hour year." One's forty hours, approximately, meant a two-lecture-a-week course in each of the two major teaching terms of eight weeks, and the same in the teaching part of the examination term (the first four weeks of the third eight-week term, the rest being for student reading, and examination week). It was, however, possible in some cases to take classes with less per-hour credit. For a few years, my load included eight classes in "Money" for third year, shared by rotation over three groups with Joan Robinson and Richard Kahn. (I had to make up the reading list, and explain to Kahn that once we decided the first person's first rotation we had fixed the whole programme, each year.) There were also five lectures on the Theory of the Balance of Payments. The lectures were mostly held in the Mill Lane lecture rooms (opened in 1928), though sometimes in other odd rooms in university buildings; and one of the classes was held in a room in King's. In other Faculties, lectures were frequently given in a room in the individual instructor's own College (or, when classes were small, in his own College study). I suspect this was probably true of some of the lecture courses offered in the inter-War period (the "special lectures" offered in the early 1930s were presented in a University lecture hall).

In any case, the fact that one gave so few formal lectures, and made a special trip away from one's own College or home to make them, in buildings intended for lecturing and not for loitering, meant that one had very little if any regular contact with other Faculty members outside of one's own College. There were, in fact, only four kinds of occasions on which one met non-College colleagues academically.

THESE WERE, first, if one were appointed to one of the Boards of Examiners. There were three of these: Tripos Part I, Preliminary Examination, and Tripos Part II. One was not allowed to examine in the subject on which one lectured for

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the year to which one taught it. The examinations were by papers, not by courses; all examiners (including two external examiners in Part II, usually Oxford or London dons but occasionally provincial professors) had to agree on the presence and the wording of all questions on all papers, each contributing some questions to other papers as well as the one for which he was primarily responsible; all papers had to be read by two examiners, and by one or more additional examiners in case of disagreement in marks or serious disparities between a candidate's performances on different papers; and the decisions on "classes" (I, II(i), II(ii), III, and "Special"—meaning failed this examination but would probably pass it on a re-trial, hence allowed a degree anyway) had to be agreed by all examiners and the list made out and signed, all within a couple of weeks' time.

It was in the process of setting the questions, and even more in the grading of the candidates' performances, that doctrinal disputes and philosophical differences among Faculty members, and between them and non-Cambridge economics as represented by the external examiners, came into confrontation most seriously. Elsewhere they could be studiously ignored, or steered on inconclusive non-collision courses. The emphasis on the undergraduate final examinations and the marking and outcome of them, incidentally, explains the concentration of Joan Robinson and Nicholas Kaldor on criticism of what the undergraduate textbooks and the professors teach the young, and of "orthodoxy" more generally.

Secondly, one could get elected to the Faculty Board. To do so, however (for an economist, as distinct from an economic historian or a politics specialist), required considerable seniority and/or, in my period, strong attachment to the Left or the Right political wing of the Department. The Faculty Board was a strongly political body, in the sense of both academic and party politics. It controlled the committees that selected new Assistant Lecturers and Lecturers, and the Faculty representation and Faculty nominations for outside economist representation on the University Committees that appointed Professors (and, I believe, Readers). It also of course decided the day-to-day Faculty business.

Third, there was the Political Economy Club, founded by J. M. Keynes and continued by D. H. Robertson in my day. Student membership was by invitation, automatic for Part I Firsts and almost so for II.1s. Faculty were free to attend by implicit open invitation, visiting economists by explicit invitation only. Meetings were on Thursdays in my day; papers were written and read by students, mostly third-year (sometimes second-year students from the Commonwealth taking their second B.A. via the second and third (Part II) years of the Tripos). Students drew slips to determine the order in which they (six of them) were obliged to comment on the paper—a procedure derived from the "Society of Apostles." Faculty were free to choose the point at which they spoke about the subject; visitors spoke by invitation. In Keynes' time, I was told, more than one visitor who chose to speak was told in no uncertain terms that he was a fool; Robertson was invariably gentle and polite. The proceedings were formal—set speeches rather than cut-and-thrust—but occasionally one found it worth while to carry on discussion with a colleague after the meeting formally ended.

Finally (in my day, but I am fairly sure not before the War), early in each autumn term the Faculty put on a large sherry party, to which were invited all Faculty and their wives, and all academic visitors to the Faculty and their wives. It says something for the lack of academic and social integration of the Cambridge Faculty that at one of these parties I met Claude Guillebaud (Alfred Marshall's nephew, and a life-long Cambridge man) who asked me, "Who's that fellow over there?" I looked, and answered with surprise, "Why, that's Andrew Roy. He's been a member of the Faculty for three years now!" Of course, Roy taught statistics ("applied economics") and was therefore somewhat out of the main stream. He was also regarded by the King's group as one of the Robertson–Guillebaud mob, and for that reason they tried unsuccessfully to refuse him tenure, in spite of the fact that he had already produced some first-class articles and been co-author of a good book with Alan Prest.

WITH THE EXCEPTION OF the few unlucky enough not to have won a College Fellowship, one's academic as well as social life lay within one's College (and, in Keynes's case, also in London), and not in the Faculty and among one's professional economist colleagues. There were, of course, some possibilities of social connections outside the College within the University community, such as D. H. Robertson's interest in acting, and Keynes's membership in the "Society of Apostles." But the Society had in the period after World War I become largely a King's College group. There was a certain connection between the Society's homosexual orientation, veiledly disclosed in Keynes's *Two Memoirs* ("Dr. Melchior" and "My Early Beliefs"), and King's College's reputation as the centre of homosexuality. Before I became a Fellow of King's, I remember being shocked by a Cambridge Professor of Archaeology referring to King's College Chapel as "The First Church of Christ, Sodomite." He was right—but the faithful did not

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proselytise their religion among mature adults. The connection was symbolised by E. M. Forster's posthumous novel *Maurice*, with its theme of the transformation from intellectual to physical homosexuality.

The College was the centre of life, especially for the unmarried Fellows to whom college was home (with possibly a family or a devoted mother located elsewhere as a vacation home); and they did not participate much if at all in the home entertainments of the group of married dons. Bachelor Fellows were far commoner in the inter-War period and early 1940s than they have since become.

BEFORE I PURSUE THIS POINT, it is worth commenting on the fact that there was so little personal contact between economists in different Colleges, even men of the same age group. One reason was presumably an indirect result of the long reign of the bachelor, and after the first War distinctly misogynist and misanthropic, Professor A. C. Pigou. Pigou, as his *Times* obituary (attributed to D. H. Robertson) rather acidly informs us, took little interest in Tripos reform and related teaching matters. Another reason was the very busy Term timetable of a don. One bought a specially printed diary for the academic (not the calendar) year, already containing printed information on various University events, and one quickly filled it with one's teaching and College fixtures and further crammed it with various kinds of meetings and appointments. A third reason was the emphasis on the privacy of one's College rooms. One opened one's doors for one's pupils, and a few College familiars and cronies; but casual dropping in on or by colleagues was unwelcome on the one side and known to be presumptuous on the other.

A final reason was the unfamiliarity and usually the inconvenience of the telephone, which so far as I can judge was generally installed in the Fellows' rooms only after the Second World War. In any case, the telephone was feared and shunned by the older generation. This is known to have been the case with Keynes, so far as casual contact with strangers and casual acquaintances was concerned, though he did we are told speak with the brokers every business morning by telephone. In place of the telephone and personal visits, communication with colleagues was carried on by handwritten notes. This was very efficient, in its way, since not only did the Cambridge post-office make deliveries on the same day (at least three deliveries a day, I understand, in pre-War II days) but the University had its own internal postal system, manned by the College porters. The College supervision and University lectures system was congenial to this system of communication. The lectures were very formal—D. H. Robertson and Maurice Dobb, to my personal knowledge, and in my generation Robin Matthews, wrote out their lectures in full and read them (in Robertson's case, it was a reading in a theatrical sense). The students did not ask questions, but sat in respectful silence to the end—or did not come at all. The supervisions involved more personal contact and meeting of minds with the students, but they were basically a playing of the formal roles of instructor and instructed, and their essence was formal interpretation, criticism and defence of a written document. It was natural enough—and incidentally a great boon subsequently to the editors of Keynes's papers—to request a written statement on a point of disagreement, and to give a written reply, among people who had little or no experience of open public argument, except perhaps in the artificial form of formal debates in the Cambridge Union.

I HAD TWO EXPERIENCES, or more accurately one single experience and one sequence of them, of this system of academic communication in my early days at Cambridge, before it fell out of fashion with changing personalities and communication technology and habits.

Just before I arrived in Cambridge, I had published a short note in *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* on "An Error in Ricardo's Exposition of His Theory of Rent." It was a typical case of over-generalising a particular arithmetical example into a general principle. On arrival in Cambridge I found Maurice Dobb and Piero Sraffa much excited by my note, which they were sure was wrong; Sraffa even proposed to publish a criticism of my note, thereby breaking nineteen (I think) years of silence. They were then both Fellows of Trinity College, with rooms not too far apart. Nevertheless, I was shown a stack of notes that had passed between them, notes replete with such phrases as "Johnson's fallacy is. . . ." I would have been overjoyed to have smoked Sraffa out of his long silence, especially as I felt sure that my mathematics were correct. But, unfortunately or fortunately, Sraffa eventually looked up Edwin Cannan's history of economic thought and found the error already noted there; whereupon he dropped the subject.

That taught me two lessons: one about the scholarship of Cambridge, and the other about the scholarship of Joseph Schumpeter, who had encouraged me to write up and publish the note. On balance I far prefer Schumpeter's style. If one does not know the literature, and a young man can prove an error one had not noticed, it is

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better to encourage him than to assume that he must be wrong; better still, of course, to check the literature in order to guard against unnecessary claims of originality in the establishment of errors.

The other illustration concerns several attempts by Joan Robinson to engage me in economic discussion by return of post. The difficulty was that she proceeded directly to differences in conclusion, without exploring the logical sequence by which she had reached hers and with obvious contempt for the processes of reasoning by which I had reached mine. Also, I never learned to fling the word "fallacy" about with Cantabrigian abandon; and notes ending "I challenge you to . . ." made me quail. But Joan Robinson was a natural public debater, not an ivory-tower academic correspondent.

UNDERLYING THE REASONS I have just given for the isolation of Faculty members in their Colleges, however, was a fundamental fact of physical geography, left implicit in my presentation so far.

This was that the Faculty had effectively no geographic administrative and business centre. Geographically, it existed only as a staircase in the science building on Downing Street, just inside and to the right of the entrance archway. The location was about two blocks from the Mill Lane Lecture Rooms (themselves, as I have mentioned, no favourable venue for intra-Faculty encounters), and much more distant than that from any of the important economics teaching colleges—King's, Clare, Caius, Trinity, and St John's. Most of the space was taken up by the Marshall Library, over the archway. Faculty members met there occasionally *en passant*, while collecting or returning books (there were no limited borrowing periods for them, and most had substantial personal libraries and regularly bought the new books in the local bookshops) or browsing over the new journals displayed on the open shelves. But the librarians naturally discouraged conversation in the Library's single large hall, and there was no place outside to congregate except around the stairway and entrance. Above the Library was a large room used for the weekly meetings of the (general undergraduate) Marshall Society, and during the day for a few classes and lectures, especially in statistics, the hand-calculators being used at other times by a few hard-working graduate students. Apart from that, there was the Royal Economic Society office on the first floor *en route* to the Marshall Library—a place swamped with new books received, Royal Economic Society publications awaiting sale, and stacks of manuscripts and galleys, presided over by Austin Robinson and his editorial assistant from time to time. On the ground floor, tucked under the stairs, was the Faculty Office, during my day a poky little room with one secretary in charge. (I do not know whether there was even one, pre-War.) The secretary was theoretically—but not in practice—free to do Faculty member typing when not busy on Faculty business typing for the Faculty Secretary. In fact, those who had letters or (much more rarely) manuscripts to be typed used their College Office or a famous Cambridge institution, Miss Pate's, which did typing and sent in girls to take dictation of letters. (Lord Kahn once told me that he had a girl in one morning a week from Miss Pate's, because otherwise his correspondence would get out of hand.) I was unique at that time: I could do my own typing. Fortunately, the prosperity of the Department of Applied Economics under Richard Stone's direction enabled one to wangle professional typing of statistical or mathematical papers free-of-charge from time to time.

There is one other relevant fact, so obvious that I have almost overlooked it—the automobile was virtually unknown to the academic, even in the early 1950s. (The only car-owners I recall were Ruth Cohen, who had been corrupted by a travelling fellowship in the pre-War United States, and Nicholas Kaldor, who was independently wealthy.) The automobile vastly encourages mobility, partly by saving time, and partly by removing the boredom of slowly traversing space on foot. Without it (and without the convenient telephone), spatial movement requires a calculation of the time-cost of movement of personal physical location, and an estimation of the probability of a journey being fruitless. In short, the absence of the automobile, and the resulting need to go by foot or bicycle for short distances and by train for longer ones, powerfully reinforced the other incentives to make one's college rooms the focus of one's academic activities, and to communicate with colleagues by postal notes.

TO RETURN TO my main theme, one's professional and social life was concentrated inside one's college. That meant that one was more or less entirely on one's own as an economist.

This was true even of the few large Colleges, and not so large ones such as King's, which either needed more than one economist for teaching, or had one to spare as a by-product of some College administrative position. The reason was that, even though the Cambridge Economics Faculty (and other Faculties) made a great point of democratic equality, and everyone called everyone else by his first name (Kahn was so distressed by my persistence in calling him "Mr

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Kahn" that he finally sternly told me point-blank to please call him Richard), there were both very definite age and generation differentials that were respected by great formality in people's behaviour to one another even if they were Fellows of the same College. Insistence on the outer forms of democratic equality is, to be sure, not unknown in North America. Both at Harvard, when I was a graduate student there, and later at Chicago, I remember being struck by the habit of referring to colleagues as "Mister —"; partly it was the American equivalent of Cambridge first names, but also because in Cambridge (and in the United Kingdom generally) one was careful to describe colleagues in front of non-colleagues as "Doctor" or "Professor", but only when they actually held the title. In the less eminent Departments in the United States, however, rank is noticed and described fairly punctiliously. The important difference, however, was that in Cambridge it was age-group rather than rank that segregated Department members hierarchically. This was related, on the one hand, to the fact that the archetypal Cambridge or Oxford don made his career from matriculation to retirement and ultimately death or senile incarceration in the same College; and, on the other hand, to the related fact that each succeeding year's crop of B.A.s made their subsequent careers and positions in British society on the basis of their relative competitive performance on that one year's examinations. Thus, the peer-group and the rivals were defined once and for all, and naturally included only a few individuals close in age to oneself.

My own experience, in any case, was that I received no assistance whatsoever from my seniors in the Faculty, and especially those in my own College, in the way of comments on my early professional papers. In fact, though I continued to give them copies, I got used to having Richard Kahn ask me, some six months or so later, whether the paper I had given him was going to be published; when I said "yes" he would express gratitude that he would now not have to read it. They, in their turn, occasionally remembered to give me a copy of something they had written, but I "was not expected to reply" (to quote the standard King's College High Table rule when a guest's health was proposed). I remember once pointing out to Nicholas Kaldor that in a paper on policy theory he had forgotten his own past demonstration that, after a certain point, increasing a tariff to improve a country's terms of trade would make the country worse and not better off. Only slightly and momentarily embarrassed, he admitted that the paper had already been sold to the F.A.O., but would be published where no one would notice it.

Since the so-called "Circus" played a significant role at one stage in the transition from *The Treatise* to *The General Theory*, it is worth recording perhaps that (in 1949–50 or 1950–51, or so) we junior Cambridge Lecturers did run an informal seminar, for the purpose of reading Paul Samuelson's *Foundations*. But it was always difficult to arrange a time at which we could all meet, and for us individually to manage to do our homework; and the effort eventually petered out. Instead, the Department of Applied Economics seminar, run by its full-time research staff, became the centre for mathematical-theoretical and econometrically-inclined junior Faculty staff.

THE ISOLATION OF A CAREER centred on the individual's College—with contact with comparable professional economists being derived almost exclusively from the reading one chose to do, and with only a small number of such economists, almost exclusively located in Cambridge, Oxford, and London, being considered as worthy of attention or criticism—obviously had a number of conditioning effects on professional academic writing.

To begin with, apart from the reading of literature and the pursuit of controversy within Cambridge by note-of-hand, there were three main types of personal participation in everyday economic discussion.

One, already mentioned, was through the formal lecturing. Here there was essentially no feedback from the students—except through the dropping off of auditors, which was an institutionalised expectation attributable to a variety of reasons and not easily translatable into a judgment of professional competence in general, let alone a judgment on the validity of particular arguments or formulations of problems. (Where it might seem to be so, it could be explained away by political bias motivating supervisors to advise their supervisees against attending.)

A second, also not very useful professionally, was through conversation with other, non-economist Fellows, especially at High Table dinners. In this connection, College practices differed greatly in the extent to which regular dinners at High Table meant a random alternation of dinner conversationalists. In Jesus College, for example, where I was attached to High Table before I won my King's Fellowship, one assembled always in order of seniority. One could escape one's lifetime dinner companions only by bringing a guest to sit at the Master's right hand, or by arriving apologetically too late for the procession and the grace, and sitting at the bottom of the table with the hope of having a neighbour

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outstanding enough to compensate the sodden drag of the ever-present College Chaplain. In King's, on the other hand (thanks partly to the geographical accident that Senior Common Room was not directly adjacent to the High Table end of the Hall, but at the opposite end), one entered in a straggling mob after the Provost, and could with luck select one's table neighbours. It was also respectable, thanks to A. C. Pigou's example, to arrive consistently just after the grace (for vaguely agnostic reasons), and thus be able to sit among kindred unreligious spirits.

In any case, the rule was that one must not "talk shop." This meant, in practice, that one talked either about cultural events or about the government's social and economic policy, in either case relying for level and topics on careful reading of the morning newspaper. *The Times* was, and for that matter still is, the British economist's only really seriously required reading; and a steady diet of it has a profound influence in shaping British economists' concepts of both economic policy problems and feasible ("politically acceptable") solutions.

This is, incidentally, an important point about British economic policy discussion both past and present. It has certainly been important (and dangerous) in recent years, when *The Times* leaders on economic policy have been written by bright young Oxford B.A.s in Politics, Philosophy and Economics, who believe in the standard Oxford panaceas of a higher price for Gold (for the international monetary system), Incomes Policy (for inflation and the balance of payments), and International Commodity Agreements (for economic development and international justice). The influence of *The Times* (and, for the early part of the period, the *Manchester Guardian*, and perhaps also the *Telegraph*) on British economists' conceptions of Britain's economic problems in the inter-War period has not, so far as I know, been seriously discussed. I would like to recommend it as a subject for serious study in British economic history and the recent history of the development of economic theory, one aspect of which would be the influence of the "quality British press" on Keynes' economic writings.

THE THIRD, AND BY FAR THE MOST SERIOUS and important, personal exposure to economic discussion came through the supervisions. These, however, were only very rarely exacting in the sense that one had a pupil both able and argumentative to deal with. For this there were two main reasons, apart from the fact that one taught all three years and that the pupils naturally varied in quality. One was that the Tutor or Tutors, in deciding admissions, tended to be guided both by the desire for a representative sample of students likely to fill the various positions of social and economic success (in British industry, government, landed estate agriculture, and so on), and by an ideal concept of the type of young man that should represent what the College stood for, an ideal which stressed all-roundness, good family, or sophistication rather than solid academic excellence. In my time, they were fighting a losing battle on behalf of the non-intellectual indifferent student. But in the inter-War period, I understand, they were both short of revenue and students, and willing to stretch admission rules very far in favour of the progeny of previous undergraduate members of the College.

The other reason was that because (in contrast to other Triposes) Economics had a one-year Part I and a two-year Part II, it tended to attract many more students for the Part I than continued into Part II, the students switching to a preferred Tripos for their Part II and their degree. (In particular, intending Law students could avoid the horrors of Roman Law, compulsory in the Law Part I, by taking Part I Economics instead. Part I Economics was also used, sometimes, as a means of obtaining a B.A. for a really dim but blue-blooded student, in combination with Part I Agriculture (or Estate Management). In consequence, the preponderance of one's supervisory activities was occupied by Part I teaching of elementary principles.[2] College Fellows with special administrative responsibilities in their Colleges, or with special bargaining power, could however manage to confine their supervisory work to supervisions, or classes, with selected high-quality students, as presumably Keynes did and as Kaldor managed to do in my time.

This kind of audience for one's everyday teaching and discussion of economics necessarily forms and distorts one's concept of the audience one is addressing through one's written work—if, that is, one does not (as many Oxford and Cambridge dons do) content oneself with oral communication through lectures, supervisions, and discussions with economist and non-economist academic cronies and colleagues. The most obvious example is actually a common Oxford style, related to the character of the Politics, Philosophy and Economics course and examination tradition, and best exemplified in the work of R. F. Harrod, J. R. Hicks, and many other lesser luminaries.

[2] The Faculty exploited this situation by minimising the lectures for Part I students by offering no optional lecture courses at that level, and using its Part I student numbers to justify appointments of lecturers who gave Part II optional courses; there was also some evidence of professional discrimination against Part I lecturing, which tended to be assigned to the weaker colleagues.

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It can best be described as a sort of conversation with oneself, a dramatic monologue performed for a somewhat dim audience of economic amateurs, in which one works one's way laboriously through a succession of false starts and red herrings, eventually winding up with the more or less obvious and correct approach and solution to the problem at hand. It is a style presumably effective for instruction of a captive audience of bashful undergraduates, whom one is committed to instruct for an hour on some basic principle that could be communicated in a few minutes to anyone with a logical mind and a distrust of the economic pronouncements of the socially powerful but academically illiterate. But it is tedious in the extreme for a professional economist to have to wade through.

The Cambridge equivalent is a little less burdensome but equally irritating to a professional. It posits a nameless horde of faceless orthodox nincompoops, among whom a few recognisable faces can be discerned, and proceeds to ridicule a travesty of their published, presumed, or imputed views in the process of revealing the unorthodox truth in a simple encapsulated form suitable for the average undergraduate to swallow without gagging.

THIS IS THE EXTREME FORM of the modern post-Keynesian-Cambridge style, which unfortunately *The General Theory* did so much to implant. It has three major elements in it. All are traceable directly to salient characteristics of Cambridge as an academic environment.

(1) The belief that fundamental questions of social and economic policy are ultimately determined by debate among a handful of academic economists, in Cambridge and at most two other British universities. *(2)* Policy failure is the result of bad—and bad means orthodox, or more generally pedestrian, tedious, and unimaginative —economics. *(3)* The world is to be put right by instructing the undergraduate students at Cambridge and elsewhere in the complex fallacies committed by orthodox economics and the simple truth as derived by anti-orthodox economic theory.

The older, pre-*General Theory* Cambridge style was much gentler and more sophisticated, though it had the same basic ingredients—concentration on criticism of the work of a few eminent British economists, often not identified directly by name and reference (a scathing and extremely unscholarly attack on F. A. Hayek in *The General Theory*, for example, is indexed, necessarily, under "wild duck"); allusions to the economic views and pronouncements of leading contemporary political figures; digressions into speculations of a vaguely philosophical or historical nature, of a type appealing to cultured undergraduates; and the basic assumption that the principal aim is to instruct undergraduates and guide them through the literature. A further noteworthy characteristic is the tendency to eschew, except for illustrative purposes, both mathematics and statistical analysis which go beyond the capacity of an intelligent layman. In this respect, the Cambridge style was heavily and lastingly imprinted by the views of Alfred Marshall on the writing of economics, though Marshall's desire to write for the instruction of the average intelligent businessman has long since been abandoned in favour of writing for the instruction of the ebullient undergraduate, the sole remaining exception being the efforts of James Meade (Oxford-trained) to write formal economic theory in a form relevant to the concerns of the economic policy-maker.

IN CONCLUSION, I would like to touch briefly on two themes which thinking about Cambridge as an environment for academic economists suggests to me, but which I have not as yet had time to pursue further.

First, I have mentioned that the examination framework of P.P.E. at Oxford tends to produce a particular, philosophy-oriented, style of economic writing among its professional economist products. It seems to me that Cambridge philosophy had a similar influence on Cambridge economics thinking, discussion, and writing (despite the separation of economics from philosophy, and largely also from politics, in the structure of the Cambridge Tripos). It was an influence mediated through Keynes as a result of his membership in the "Society of Apostles", his early work on probability, his interest in collecting old books, and his friendship with Frank Ramsey and other King's College philosophers. What I have in mind here specifically is Keynes' use, particularly in the early 1930s (*e.g.* his reply to Ohlin in the controversy over German reparations in June 1929, and his correspondence with Robertson and others just after the *Treatise* was published) of a particular philosophy-discussion device. It can be paraphrased as "I cannot answer your question until you explain to me what you mean by the words . . . " (or, "I cannot be sure I have understood your question because I do not know what you mean by the words . . . ") —a ploy which became discredited during the Second World War by the BBC Brains Trust philosopher C. E. M. Joad's stock answer to a question, "It all depends what you mean by . . . [some crucial word in the question]". This device is, of course, a very attractive one for turning an undergraduate's awkward questions into an

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opportunity for teaching him what one knows and dismissing other peoples' analyses as unsatisfactory. The philosophical approach underlying it—which stresses semantic analysis of statements to the neglect of the operational and scientific purpose of the logical analysis of which the statements are constituents—had, I suspect, a great deal to do with the obvious logical inconsistencies in *The General Theory* (which can also be explained by a rather amateurish but, on the whole, commendable desire to provide empirically observable referents for the theoretical constructs). It is also involved in the outbreak of heated semantic debates that raged on its publication (especially about the savings/investment identity/equality).

The second theme is the influence of the nature of the Cambridge and Oxford College as an economic institution on the ideas of academic economists resident therein. The Colleges are, or largely were until the "student troubles" of the late 1960s, fundamentally feudal institutions. They were based on landed property owned by the College, administered cooperatively by the Fellows collectively and specifically by a subgroup among them semi-self-selected by administrative interest and loosely controlled by a system of semi-egalitarian semi-gerontological personal-participation democracy, functioning to turn out qualified members of the élite or the establishment (including their own replacements) and dependent on the organised supporting services of the College Servants, the porters and kitchen staff. Maynard Keynes, as Bursar of King's, was one of the pioneers in shifting the financial base of the College system from landed property to industrial stocks and bonds.[3] This shift involved, in Keynes' hands, an emphasis on speculation and capital gains, which had an obvious influence on his professional work. Robertson indeed criticised the theory of liquidity preference as "a College Bursar's theory of interest," referring particularly to Keynes' neglect of interest as the productive return on capital.

More generally, it is possible to relate, in two major ways, Keynes' social philosophy to the nature of the College as an economic institution. One concerns the working class and its welfare. If one thinks of the attitude of a College governing body towards its College servants, it seems natural to think of guaranteed employment as the main obligation of the employer towards its employees, together with the payment of wages just competitive with going market wage rates (or slightly below) and with gratitude and loyalty assured by the conferment of extensive fringe benefits (notably sports facilities, subsidised housing, and free food and drink).

The other concerns attitudes to the entrepreneurial class. It would be natural for College Fellows who had trained the business executive class, usually at the lower end of the spectrum of academic capacity and performance, to regard businessmen as a class as rather inferior to College Fellows. These were people for whom some reputable non-academic non-governmental employment should be found, but who should not be rewarded on an inordinate scale for success in their second-rate activities. It would also be natural for such academics to believe that the messes into which the practical world of business and politics got itself resulted from the defect of inferior intelligence or, alternatively, the lack of a system of corporate decision-taking comparable to that of a College Fellowship body and its Council.[4] What was left to any of us but to look to intelligent academic discussion by dispassionate and public-spirited dons as the obvious means by which to create a better world?

[3] He was also the innovator of the shift by his College from dependence on land rents to direct farm management, a story not relevant here but which ultimately proved a very expensive mistake for the College.

[4] For a modern version of this point of view, see Robin L. Marris, *The Economic Theory of Managerial Capitalism* (1964).

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LETTERS

Cole, Webb, Marx

IT IS PERFECTLY TRUE, as Margaret Cole says [ENCOUNTER, May, p. 91], that one cannot accuse Beatrice Webb of exceptionally virulent anti-Semitism. However, neither can she be said to have shown any particular sympathy for Jews—and that is putting it mildly! When, during the spring of 1887, she spent several weeks in the East End of London, she made certain observations about the Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe which show a surprising degree of prejudice—perhaps not for the time when she wrote—but certainly enough to warrant some raised eyebrows today.

For what Beatrice Webb actually wrote, I refer Margaret Cole (and other interested readers) to her article "East London Labour", *Nineteenth Century* XXIV (1888), especially pp. 176–177, 301–314 and "The Jewish Community", in *Labour and Life of the People in London* (1889), edited by Charles Booth, Vol. 1, pp. 586, 589.

What one discovers there are not simply empirical observations about sweated labour in the East End or the willingness of Jewish immigrants to work almost unlimited hours for little pay. Beatrice Webb, rather than sympathising as a socialist with the plight of these immigrants, criticised them for an alleged indifference to the principles of class solidarity and professional ethics. She claimed that they had no desire or capacity for trade-union organisation and that they undercut the wages of their fellow-workers. This was manifestly untrue, as was already pointed out by Friedrich Engels in a famous letter of 1890, where he drew attention to the militancy of Jewish workers in the East End. The socialist movement and trade-union organisation was quite highly developed among these Jewish immigrants (as subsequent studies by Lloyd P. Gartner and the recent book by Bill Fishman have demonstrated). Neither Beatrice nor Sidney Webb appear to have been aware of this fact, which they did not mention in their *History of Trade Unionism* (1894).

Moreover, Beatrice Webb also made some decidedly unpleasant remarks about so-called lack of social morality among these Jewish immigrants, suggesting that their lives lacked human dignity because they were solely concerned with preserving themselves and their families. She apparently thought that love of profit was the strongest trait of the Jewish race and that these immigrants saw manual labour only as a stepping-stone to future enrichment! Indeed she described Whitechapel Jews as the incarnation of Ricardo's *homo oeconomicus*—the cold, calculating market-man unmoved by sentiment or moral considerations. In other words, she identified even the poorest of the poor among the Jews with the ethics of unbridled capitalism. This does not quite put her in the same league as the socialist anti-Semites on the Continent; but it does suggest a combination of refined prejudice and manifest ignorance about the realities of East End Jewish life at that time.

AS FAR AS Max Geltman is concerned [ENCOUNTER, March, p. 92] he unfortunately overstates his case, ignoring everything which conflicts with his thesis, which has already been expounded by Edmund Silberner and others. Thus: Saint-Simon, far from lashing out at the "Jewish spirit of profit", founded the only philo-Semitic current in French socialism. Indeed (and it is well-known) the Saint-Simonians explicitly modelled themselves on Jewish messianism (see, especially, J. L. Talmon's book on *Political Messianism: The Romantic Phase*). Pierre Leroux, though he did initially attack the "Jewish spirit", eventually became a student of Judaism and the Hebrew language, enjoying the backing of such wealthy Saint-Simonists as the banker Isaac Péreire (see: George Lichtheim, "Socialism and the Jews", in *Dissent* of July–August 1968).

Jean Jaurès did not, as Mr Geltman asserts, join the "*anti*-Dreyfusard agitation in 1898"—indeed, after some wavering, he was largely responsible for rallying the French workers to Dreyfus' cause. (See my article in *The Wiener Library Bulletin*, 1975, Vol. XXVIII nos. 35/36.) Nor did August Bebel ever advocate using anti-Semitism as a tactic, which is what Mr Geltman manages to imply. Both Bebel and Jaurès can and should be criticised for their temporisations and, on occasion, even flirtation with anti-Semitism; but this requires a much more sophisticated and differentiated presentation than Mr Geltman is able to provide.

There is a case (as I have previously suggested in ENCOUNTER, November, p. 94) to be made on the subject of socialist anti-Semitism; but it is not helped by sensational assertions which put Marx and his followers in the same category as Adolf Hitler. It is precisely this inability to make distinctions which lays Max Geltman open to criticisms such as those made by Margaret Cole—though, in the case of Beatrice Webb, she has also got her facts wrong!

ROBERT S. WISTRICH
Institute of Contemporary History, London

Dutch Treat

THREE CHEERS for Henry Fairlie! I suppose every Englishman knew it already for a long time, but it still had to be said in the open, one day, and Fairlie finally did so: the difference between England and America is that between night and day (ENCOUNTER, January). Right so! One may wonder whether he was not too kind to Iris Murdoch, that Courths-Mahler for British intellectuals—a bit of English chivalry, I presume. And isn't Bernard Levin's column in *The Times* worth a lot more than the entire *Guardian*?

One remark with regard to the future, however. Can one hope in earnest that England—the United Kingdom, that is, minus Scotland and Wales—may escape her sorry plight by just adapting her language to our present age? Wouldn't she be more realistic in following Adam Smith's advice and "accommodate her future views and designs to the real mediocrity of her circumstances", now that (as he feared would happen) the dream of Empire has finally dissolved? What else can England really do than join the European Continent?

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In other words: why doesn't Fairlie apply his convert's passion for equality to England herself? Why should she *still* be "more equal" than others? Why on earth should she once again become a missionary? An American mission, an English mission, a French mission, a Russian mission, a Chinese mission . . . . The world is getting indigestion from all those missions. Shouldn't one leave it to the Dutch? We, too, are already developing the whole world. And looking at NATO, OECD, etc., it would seem that our command of English, ridiculous though it may be, is still amply sufficient to keep the international situation passably under control. You may help us a bit, as the Yanks do (since we set them in the saddle). But please spare us this archaic boasting about your noble mission. Just air, thin air, my boy!

J. G. BRUGGEMAN

's-Gravenhage,
Holland

Leonid Plyushch

I READ with pleasure, as usual, *R*'s Column in the April issue, this time analysing the pitfalls of *détente*. Especially relevant was *R*'s long quotation from Lenin about capitalist "deaf-mutes."

How unfortunate, therefore, that in this article the name of the recently released Ukrainian dissenter, Leonid Plyushch, was twice spelt as Plyushchev. To a Slavic reader this might appear to be an unconscious attempt to Russify a Ukrainian name by adding the suffix *ev*. Plyushch is a Ukrainian who declared in a Paris interview that although he is still a Marxist he is in favour of "separation of Ukraine from Russia, since this would give stimulus to the struggle for true socialism in Ukraine."

Is the capitalist world once more becoming "deaf-mute" in response to this call for national dissent from the USSR?

GEORGE LUCKYJ

University of Toronto,
Toronto, Canada

Kipling & India

APROPOS OF Mr J. I. M. Stewart's perceptive review (ENCOUNTER, September) of Philip Mason's study of Kipling, there is an aspect of Kipling which most readers and scholars of Kipling are apt to miss.

His characters, unlike in most other works of Anglo-Indian fiction, are so often drawn from the common run of humanity, both Indian and English. Kipling's is the world of Kim, Gunga Din, Mahbub Ali, Hurree Babu, and, of course, Tommy Atkins—a far cry indeed from Forster's Aziz and Fielding. India's philosopher-President, the late Dr Radhakrishnan, once said to Dr A. L. Rowse at All Souls, "that of all Western books about India *Kim* was the best; its author, Rudyard Kipling, really understood India". . . . (Dr Rowse's new Introduction to *Kim* Collier Books, New York, 1966, p.7).

The late Mr V. K. Krishna Menon once agreed to inaugurate an exhibition of Kipling's works in India

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primarily because Kipling (otherwise the Bard of Imperialism), alone among British writers on India, chose to write about the common people of India! This sentiment finds an echo in Malcolm Muggeridge's *The Green Stick* (Vol. I of *The Chronicles of Wasted Time*, p.94). During a Muggeridge lecture to the Kipling Society, a man in the audience claimed Kipling as a Marxist. Could part of the explanation for Kipling's choice of characters as well as his profound understanding of the Indian psyche be (as Mr Stewart remarks) "the Kiplings were sahibs only in an equivocal way"? One wonders. But it is a rich seam which awaits some patient and intensive mining by Kipling scholars.

A. G. CHANDAVARKAR

Washington, D.C.

Hair

KENNETH HUDSON [ENCOUNTER, March] calls attention to Edward Heath's use of the phrase, "we would talk freely, with our hair down", as a significant clue to "the other Heath." "Hair metaphors", he tells us, "are extremely rarely used by other Prime Ministers" but Heath "seems fascinated by hair." Could we have a few more examples of this fascination?

The one metaphor cited is, at least in the United States, a cliché for speaking with uninhibited candour, and is used mechanically with no awareness of distinctive metaphorical overtones. Yet on this dubious evidence Hudson presumes to let us in on the hidden depths of Heath's nature:

> "The attraction which such an image has for him may indicate both a greater measure of sexuality than he is usually credited with and a difficulty in keeping the sensual side of him perpetually repressed and away from the gaze of the prying people."

With no more support than a tired commonplace, this inference is at best Freudian baby talk or psychological quackery.

MOODY E. PRIOR

Chicago, Illinois

MY ARTICLE, "The Last Chink in Their Armour", was intended to whet the appetite. I am naturally delighted to find that at least one American appetite has been whetted and that its owner is asking for a larger meal than a mere article could provide. Even if I had the inclination, which is not the case, I have neither the capacity nor the right to psychoanalyse either Mr Heath or Mr Prior; and Freudian talk, on any level, lies outside my sphere of interest and competence. If I have used language which suggests otherwise, I can only plead ignorance and apologise.

In my article, I attempted to do no more than to suggest an approach which I believe to be fruitful and to have been unreasonably disregarded up to now. One man's cliché is another's living metaphor, of course; and tired phrases of which we are ashamed at 40 seemed vigorous and daring enough at 16. It is a matter of opinion as to whether, in Mr Heath's case, "letting one's hair down" falls north or south of the cliché-line. I can only say that I personally find it interesting that he should be fond of this particular phrase and that other British Prime Ministers of the first half-century should use it extremely rarely. What the situation may be with American Presidents or Vice-Presidents, I do not know. I have never studied their public utterances with any degree of care, and the field is wide open for Mr Prior to do so. I wish him every success and as much pleasure as I have found in my own little pasture on this side of the Atlantic.

My forthcoming book, *The Soft Under-Belly of Power*, will deal with the metaphors of a rather wider selection of post-1945 British politicians (including Dr Ian Paisley) in considerable detail; and I can only ask Mr Prior to be patient for a little longer until its appearance has made my methods and intentions clearer.

KENNETH HUDSON

Bath

Brittan & Property Rights

I AM SORRY that my friend and former pupil, Samuel Brittan, has confined to a brief footnote his discussion of the relative advantages of state and private ownership in such things as "pleasant mountain vistas and the ocean bed" [ENCOUNTER, April]. "Many of the well-known defects of modern society", he claims, "derive not from the presence but the absence . . . of property rights."

Is Mr Brittan saying, on the one hand, that the growing pollution of our countryside and seas is a consequence of the unfettered ownership of such things as confectionery (toffee wrappings, crisps containers, etc), tobacco (packets, cartons, tins, burnt matches and fag-ends) and oil (slicks); and that, on the other hand, in the Soviet Union, for example, the presence of property rights in public places gives their streets and woodlands that freedom from the litter we are cursed with in the west? And, if so, is there a moral?

STEPHEN CORRIN

London

Marx's Anti-Semitism

YOUR CORRESPONDENT D. P. H. Allen of Toronto seems determined to split Marx as a man from that work of art, the Marxist philosophical system. But, as Dr A. L. Rowse has written in another connection: "There is nothing more obtuse than to say that the biographical and personal have no importance for understanding works of art" (*Sunday Times*, 21 March).

Marx's anti-Semitism must be known to the present Russian régime and has undoubtedly helped to justify the persecution of the Jews in Soviet Russia from Stalin's time onwards. In addition it would be interesting to know whether Marx's anti-Great Russian and anti-Slav writings, both in German and English, are still not generally available for mass reading in the Soviet Union in Russian translation. The fact that Marx was absent from Cologne when the nasty attack on the Prussian-Polish Jews appeared

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Washington, D.C.

MINORITY RIGHTS: Federal educational guidelines flowing from the Washington bureaucracy have increasingly insisted on racial balance at the expense of other considerations. An Ivy League university was informed by HEW that it did not have enough women in its department of graduate religious studies. The university replied that a reading knowledge of Greek and Hebrew was required. HEW quite literally commanded:

> **"Then end those old-fashioned programs that require irrelevant languages. And start up programs which minority groups can study without learning languages."**

But Government-imposed distinctions among minorities make no historical, moral or practical sense. Why are blacks, Spanish-surnamed Americans, American Indians and Orientals officially classified as minorities deserving of federal assistance, while Ukrainians, Lithuanians and Greeks—to name a few—are not considered to be minorities? Liberal policy-makers, as they seek to knit an integrated society together, are unravelling it as they go.

TIME

London

HOPEFULLY: *Does anyone still care about the use of words? Indeed they do. Take "hopefully." It is not quite clear why this word—when used to mean "It is hoped that," as in the sentence, "Hopefully, the car will be ready by then"—arouses such special fury. The word has "entered the language", but it is "avoided by many writers." Indeed it is.*

Kingsley Amis has been fighting the battle here, and he objects to "hopefully" "because (a) it is an Americanism, of German origin; (b) it is not English, which is different; and (c) it is a politicians' word, as in 'hopefully, the pound will stop falling.' They can't say, 'With luck, the pound will stop falling'—which is what they mean. Nor can they say, 'I hope the pound will stop falling', because it sounds as if they're hoping against hope. They haven't got time to say, 'I am hopeful that . . .' So they say 'hopefully', trying to make you feel that there is some reason to be hopeful.

"People object because they dimly, and rightly, sense that there's some sleight of hand going on. It's a Harold Wilson word. Of course the battle is lost, but I'll never use it."

THE OBSERVER

London

TITLES: Professor John Vaizey, the economist who has just been given a peerage in Sir Harold Wilson's last Honours List, explained: "A friend suggested that I should take as the place-name of my title a town in Buckinghamshire [Milton Keynes, pop. 78,000]—because my views were half-way between Milton Friedman and Lord Keynes. . . ."

EVENING STANDARD

Peking

WHAT'S WHAT: *Especially undignified [David Bonavia reports] is the present squabble about what Chairman Mao has said and how it should be interpreted. Foreign statesmen who have met the 82-year-old chairman in recent months say his speech is so impaired that he communicates mainly by writing comments down.*

Things have got to the stage where it is regarded as a major political issue whether the chairman said the word "what" in a particular context.

Many people have come to accept that the Chinese political style is a valid way of getting things done and that it can even be considered a form of democracy, although the Chinese themselves dislike the word.

THE TIMES

Melbourne

CLEANING UP: Professor Finlay ("Fin") Crisp wants to get rid of the "lashings of fashionable, academic jargon and apparatus" in theses written by post-graduate students at Australian universities. Professor Crisp (of the political science department at the Australian National University) also wants to rid theses of "extensive technical-sounding expositions of conceptual frameworks and methodological foundations." Presumably he means big words.

THE AUSTRALIAN

London

ANGLO-AMERICANA: *Eight English noblemen, including two dukes, are reported to be touring the United States in loaned Jaguars on what is called a "British Bicentennial Heritage Mission." This is said to be part of the present extraordinary—and, some may think, tasteless—celebrations of the American Declaration of Independence.*

One nobleman who, I understand [Peter Simple writes] was approached by the promoters but declined to take part is the Earl of Mountwarlock, whose "stately home" in Leicestershire is well-known for its "wild life" park, stocked with basilisks, gorgons, wyverns, chimerae and other fabulous monsters.

The Earl, who (among other family traits) is over eight feet tall and has a single "Cyclops-type" eye in the middle of his forehead, has even refused to have Mountwarlock Court included in the "American Heritage Trail" whose signs can now be seen in the most unexpected places, on the ground that the sole connection of his property with the United States is the presence of some stone statues of American tourists, mostly carrying finely petrified cameras, at various places in the park.

Phantomsby, the Earl's factotum, familiar to visitors as "a real character" and one of the few practising werewolves still left in the Midlands, is disappointed at the Earl's refusal. "We could have done with some new blood from the New World" he told Ghoulman, the head gorgon warden. "But of course his Nibs knows best."

Ghoulman nodded gloomily. "It's like getting a stone out of blood."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

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in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* on 29 April 1849 is quite irrelevant. As editor of this periodical he was morally and legally responsible for its contents, and we all know that "copy" is often kept in a newspaper office for some time before being printed. The Marxist system certainly gives ample opportunity for hair-splitting to its servile devotees.

W. H. CHALONER

Department of History,
University of Manchester

The English as Romantics

I BELIEVE that all your writers on "Suicide of a Nation?" have not sufficiently stressed a fundamental point: the English have always been hopeless romantics, as any student of their history and literature whose eyesight is not impaired by rosy spectacles can see at a glance. From the Elizabethan sailors to the fighter pilots of 1940 they sought fulfilment in some high purpose—if not always in a mission or an ideal, then at least in the pursuit of some glorious adventure. That is why, as Henry Fairlie ["Transatlantic Letter to England" ENCOUNTER, January] is quite right in pointing out, they have had such a magnificent and rewarding past. But it may also be the reason for their failure to find their way in the modern industrial world. For who could expect the descendants of Drake's sailors to consider the production of large quantities of ugly little cars a worth-while achievement?

And what of "the greatest issue of our day": the passion for equality? Every romantic is at heart an aristocrat, raised above the masses by his very ideals, and knows that the issue is not Equality *vs.* Property but Equality *vs.* Human Nature. So why bother about, let alone care for, such an absurd idea?

Of course if this may explain, it will never solve any of Britain's current problems. But maybe a time will come when the world will again have use for the virtues of foolish romantics like the English in order to get rid of the appalling tyranny bound to result from the conquest of Our Ford's Kingdom by the Gospel according to St Marx.

H. F. JOSSI

Chur,
Switzerland

AUTHORS

Derwent May is Literary Editor of *The Listener.* His most recent novel, *The Laughter in Djakarta* (Chatto & Windus, 1973), has just been published in paperback by Quartet Books.

Domenico Bartoli is a political journalist, and was for many years editor of the Florence daily *La Nazione.* He is the author of a biography of Victor Emanuel III, of *Inghilterra senzo impero,* and of *L'Italia burocratica.* In the years immediately after the War he was correspondent for *La Stampa* in Paris and for *Corriere della Sera* in London. For 13 years he has written a column on politics and daily life, "L'Italia allo specchio", for the magazine *Epoca.* His article in this issue of ENCOUNTER forms part of his book *Gli Italiani nella terra di nessuno,* published this year by Arnaldo Mondadori Editore.

Kenneth Minogue is the author of *Nationalism* (1967) and *The Concept of a University* (Weidenfeld, 1972). His articles in ENCOUNTER include" Dr Spock Thinks Again" (July 1975), "Defending the Single Realm" (October 1974), and "Dr Fromm's Attempt at a Cure" (July 1974).

Max Hayward's article forms the introduction to Andrey Sinyavsky's *A Voice from the Chorus,* published by Collins & Harvill Press.

Michael Howard's most recent book is *War in European History* (Oxford University Press).

Andrew Shonfield is Director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs. His 1972 Reith Lectures—*Europe: Journey to an Unknown Destination*—were published by Allen Lane, and he has recently edited (and contributed to) the two-volume *International Economic Relations of the Western World, 1959–71* (Oxford University Press for RIIA).

François Bondy is an editor of the monthly *Schweizer Monatshefte* and of *Die Weltwoche* (Zurich) to which he contributes a regular column on people and politics in Europe.

Wilfrid Mellers has been Professor of Music at the University of York since 1964. He is himself a composer (his composition teachers were Edmund Rubbra and Egon Wellesz), and has written works for most media. His books include *Caliban Reborn: Renewal in 20th-Century Music* (1967), and *Twilight of the Gods: The Beatles in Retrospect* (Faber, 1973). He is currently working on complementary books on Bach and Beethoven.

Peter Porter frequently broadcasts on music for the BBC; he has written the words for a song-cycle by Nicholas Maw, and has collaborated with other composers. His most recent book of poems, *Living in a Calm Country* (Oxford University Press), has won the 1976 Cholmondeley Award.

David Fallows is a performer, researcher, and writer on early music. He has been on the faculty of the University of Wisconsin at Madison, and in October takes up an appointment to the Department of Music at the University of Manchester.

My Father Bertrand Russell, by Katharine Tait, reviewed by Maurice Cranston in the April issue of ENCOUNTER, will be published on 29 July by Victor Gollancz at £5.95.

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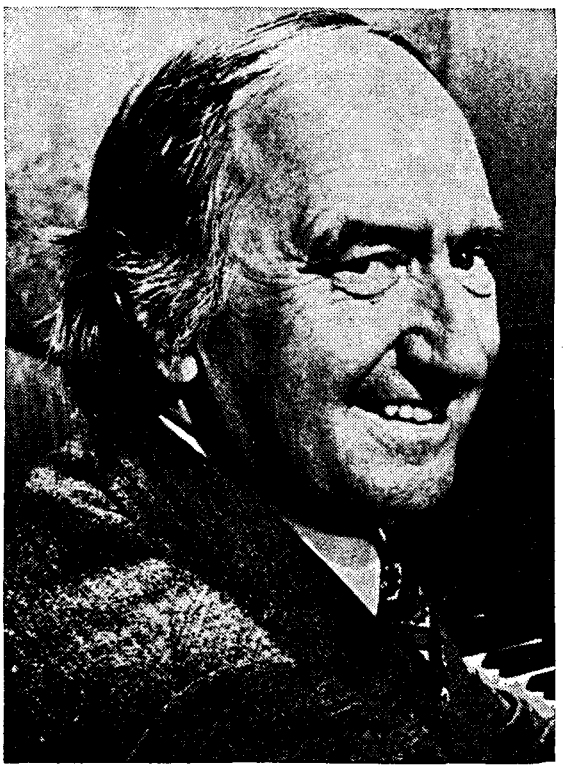

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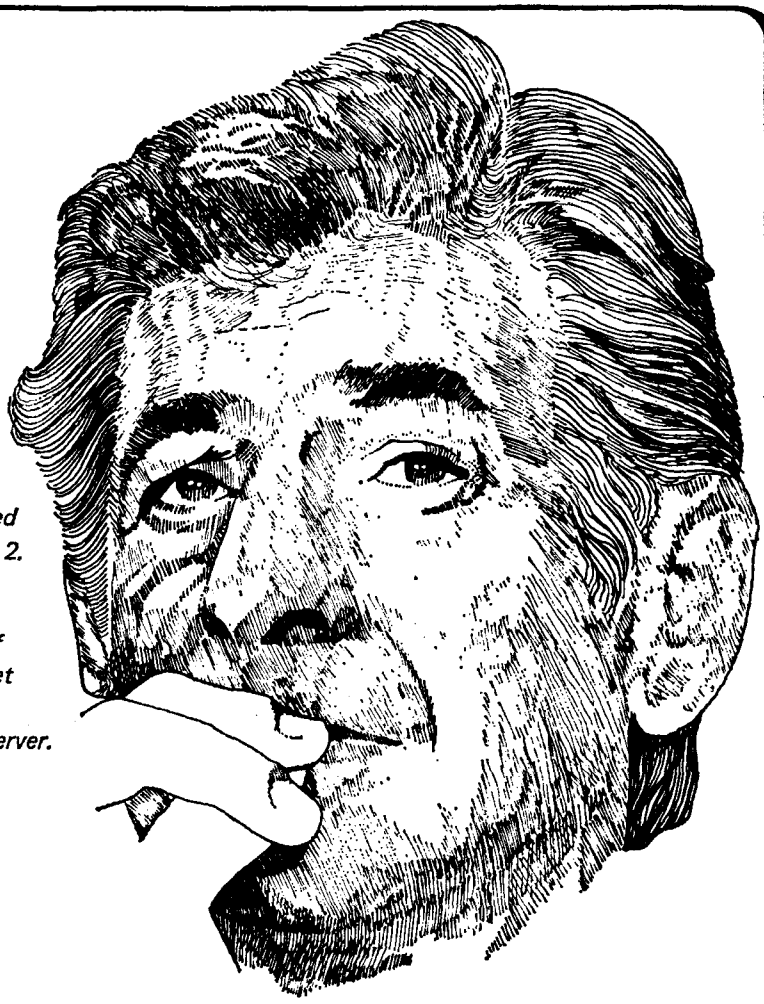

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